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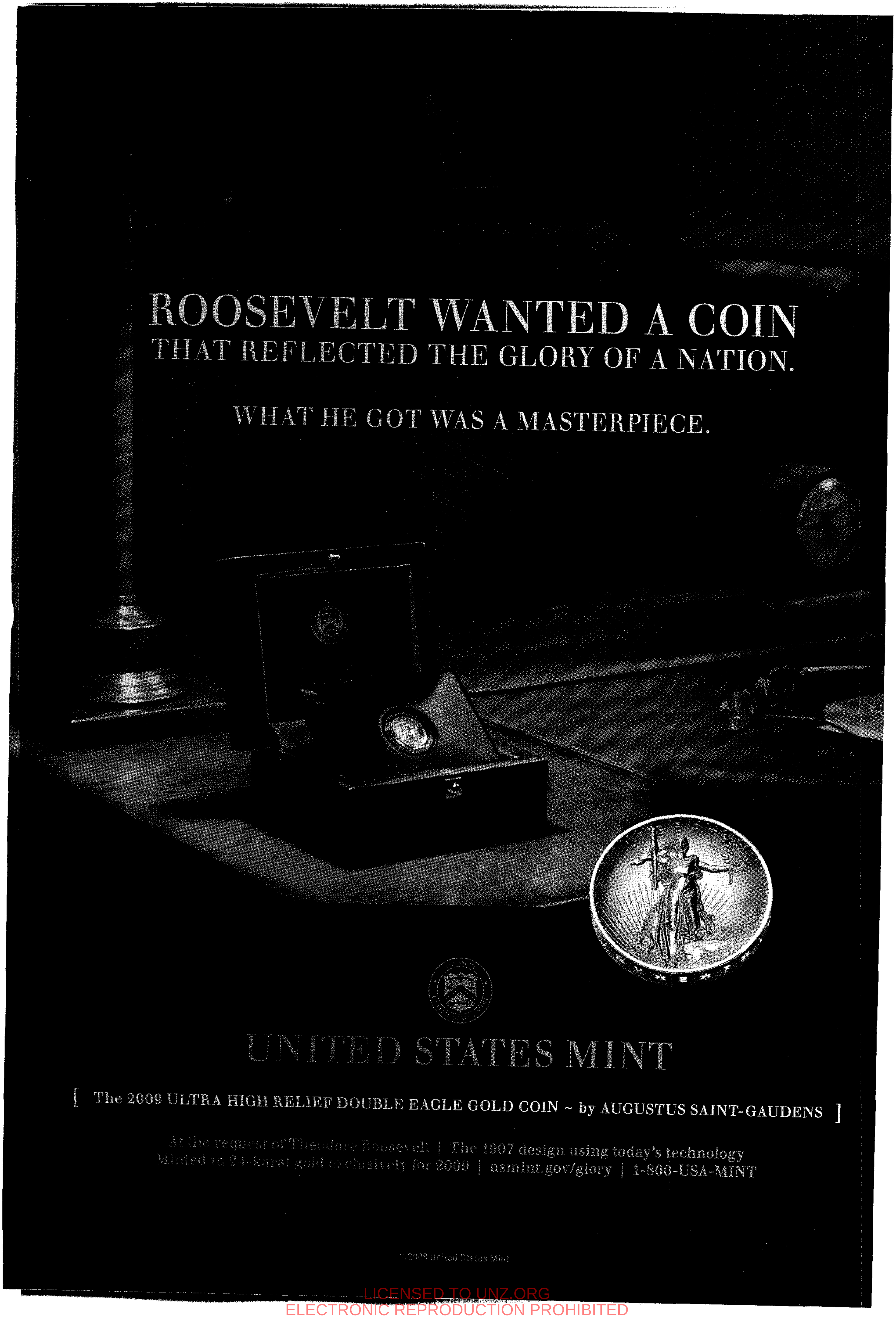
THE NEW YORKER

Gahan Wilson



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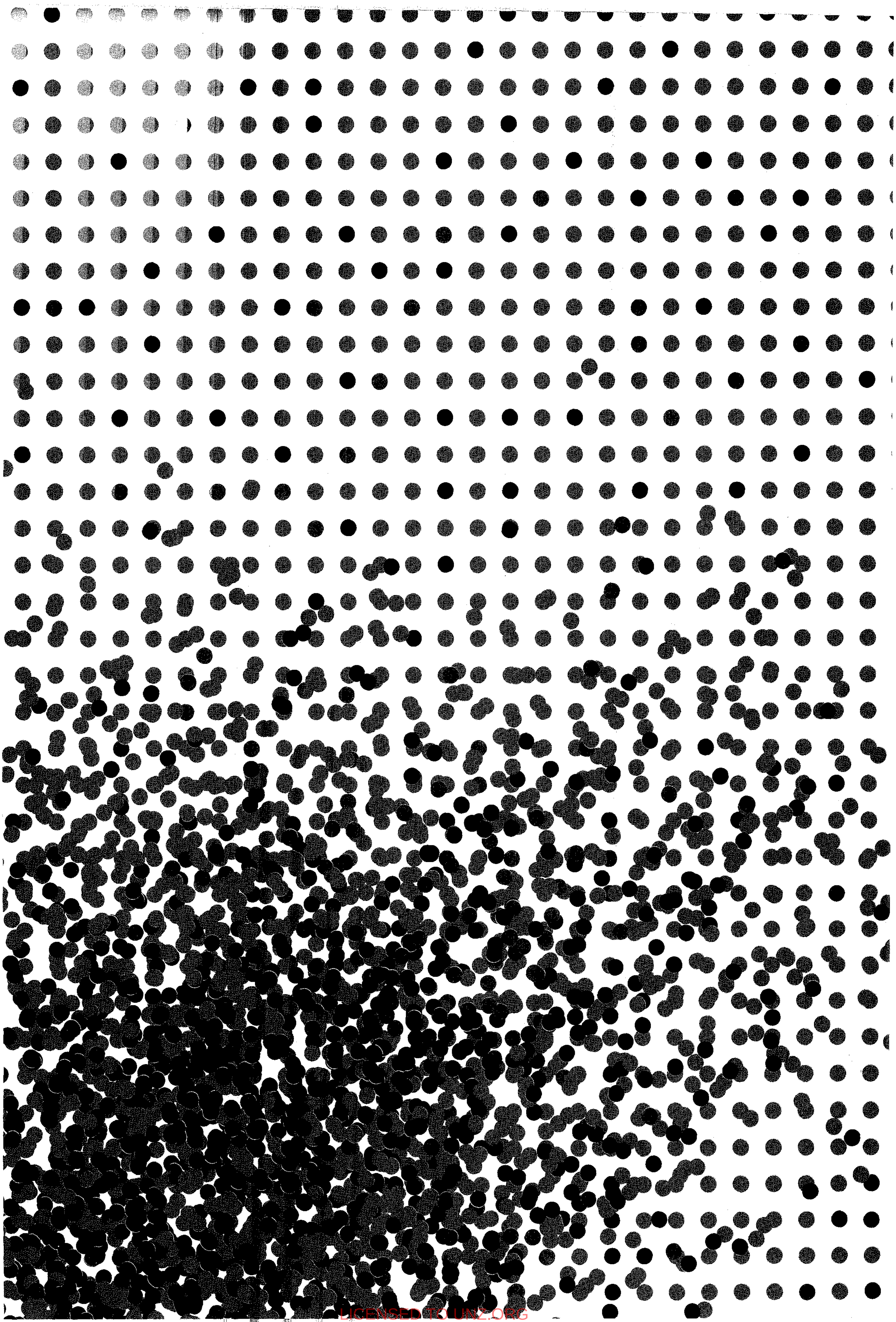

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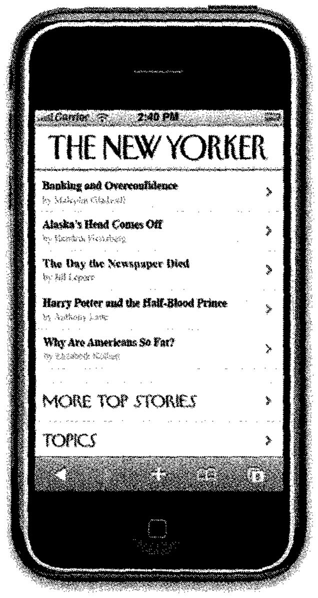
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Malcolm Gladwell ("Cocksure," p. 24), a staff writer, is the author of, most recently, "Outliers: The Story of Success."

Jeffrey Toobin (Comment, p. 19) won the 2008 J. Anthony Lukas Book Prize for "The Nine: Inside the Secret World of the Supreme Court," which is available in paperback.

Andy Borowitz (Shouts & Murmurs, p. 30) is the creator of the satirical Web site BorowitzReport.com. His new book, "Who Moved My Soap?: The CEO's Guide to Surviving in Prison—The Bernie Madoff Edition," came out in May.

Calvin Trillin ("At the Train Bridge," p. 32) has been writing for the magazine since 1963. His most recent book is "Deciding the Next Decider: The 2008 Presidential Race in Rhyme."

Doree Shafrir (The Talk of the Town, p. 22) is the author, with Jessica Grose, of "Love, Mom."

Troy Jollimore (Poem, p. 27) won a National Book Critics Circle Award for his first book of poetry, "Tom Thomson in Purgatory." "The Solipsist," a chapbook of poems, was published last year. He teaches at California State University, Chico.

Larissa MacFarquhar ("The Kindest Cut," p. 38) has been writing for the magazine since 1997.

Rebecca Mead ("Renaissance Man," p. 52) is the author of "One Perfect Day: The Selling of the American Wedding."

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Nicholas Lemann (Books, p. 70) is the dean of the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia, and a staff writer.

Joan Acocella (Dancing, p. 76) writes about dance and books for the magazine. She is the author of "Twenty-eight Artists and Two Saints," a book of essays.

Clive James (Poem, p. 48) has written fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. A new volume of memoirs, "The Blaze of Obscurity," comes out in October. "Opal Sunset: Selected Poems, 1958-2008" is his most recent book of poems.

Gahan Wilson (Cover), a cartoonist, will publish "Gahan Wilson: 50 Years of *Playboy* Cartoons" in November. This is his seventh cover for the magazine.

THIS WEEK ON NEWYORKER.COM

Larissa MacFarquhar talks about kidney donors, and takes readers' questions. / Audio: The Political Scene, a weekly podcast hosted by *Dorothy Wickenden.* / Video: *Jorge Colombo's* iPhone sketches; *Richard Brody's* DVD of the Week. / The Book Club reads "The Left Hand of Darkness," by Ursula K. LeGuin. / Blogs: *Hendrik Hertzberg* and *George Packer* on politics, *Amy Davidson* on the day's news, *Macy Halford* on books, *Sasha Frere-Jones* and *Ben Greenman* on music, and the Cartoon Lounge. / Animated cartoons, the caption contest, and a complete archive of issues, back to 1925.

THE MAIL

BREAKING GANGS

John Seabrook, in writing about C.I.R.V., the Cincinnati program aimed at reducing gang violence, illustrates how David Kennedy, the program's founder, has truly "shifted the paradigm" of law enforcement ("Don't Shoot," June 22nd). Under conventional strategy, the police function as a higher-order gang, moving in on someone else's territory and enforcing their will with violence, just as the lower-order street gangs do. Kennedy's approach allows the police to function as something much more constructive: an über-parent. Under the new program, the police force sets boundaries and offers the chance for rewards, just like parents in a functional family.
Jamie Gordon
Denver, Colo.

Cincinnati's criminal-justice system is swamped by low-level, nonviolent misdemeanors, which makes it difficult to implement proven risk-needs assessments on those high-risk offenders that C.I.R.V. targets, and to focus on evidence-based interventions. Instead, we are left with C.I.R.V.'s lack of independent empirical support, its tendency to lean ever more heavily on the stick at the expense of the carrot, and its slide into yet another iteration of failed "scared straight" interventions.
Janet Moore
Ohio Justice & Policy Center
Cincinnati, Ohio

BEFORE STONEWALL

Hendrik Hertzberg writes that the gay civil-rights movement "got its start at a most improbable hour in a most improbable place" (The Talk of the Town, July 6th & 13th). He is right that Stonewall was a major turning point, but the struggle for gay rights truly began in a Los Angeles living room in 1950, where five men (among them the fashion designer Rudi Gernreich, who later created the topless bathing suit) founded the Mattachine Society, an organization dedicated to ending discrimination against gays. In the years before the Stonewall uprising, the gay civil-rights effort grew by fits and starts, but there were key court victories, confrontations with the police (most notably, in San Francisco in 1965), public demonstrations, and even national conventions of gay-rights groups. And, in the immediate aftermath of Stonewall, it was the local chapters of the Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis (an organization for lesbians, founded in San Francisco in 1955) that organized the first protest marches.
Eric Marcus
New York City

REGULATING CAUTION

James Surowiecki is correct in pointing out that the Obama Administration's proposed Consumer Financial Protection Agency, though well intended, is likely to have a number of unintended consequences, such as stifling financial innovation, as well as a "lulling effect" on consumers' natural wariness (The Financial Page, July 6th & 13th). But there's good reason to believe that the proposed C.F.P.A. may actually undermine the consumer protections it's intended to insure. For example, creating a new agency risks monopolizing the approach to consumer protection—one agency, one staff, one blunt institutional outlook and approach. The new agency would also divorce the regulation of financial products from the regulation of the institutions that develop and market those products. And a new agency might give the other functional regulators an easy excuse: "Consumer protection's not my job." Consumer protection should be embedded in the DNA of each financial regulator, not isolated within the walls of a single agency.
John R. Dearie
Executive Vice-President
The Financial Services Forum
Washington, D.C.

•

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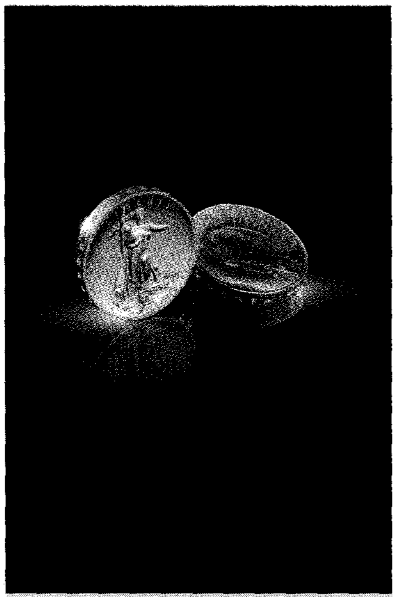

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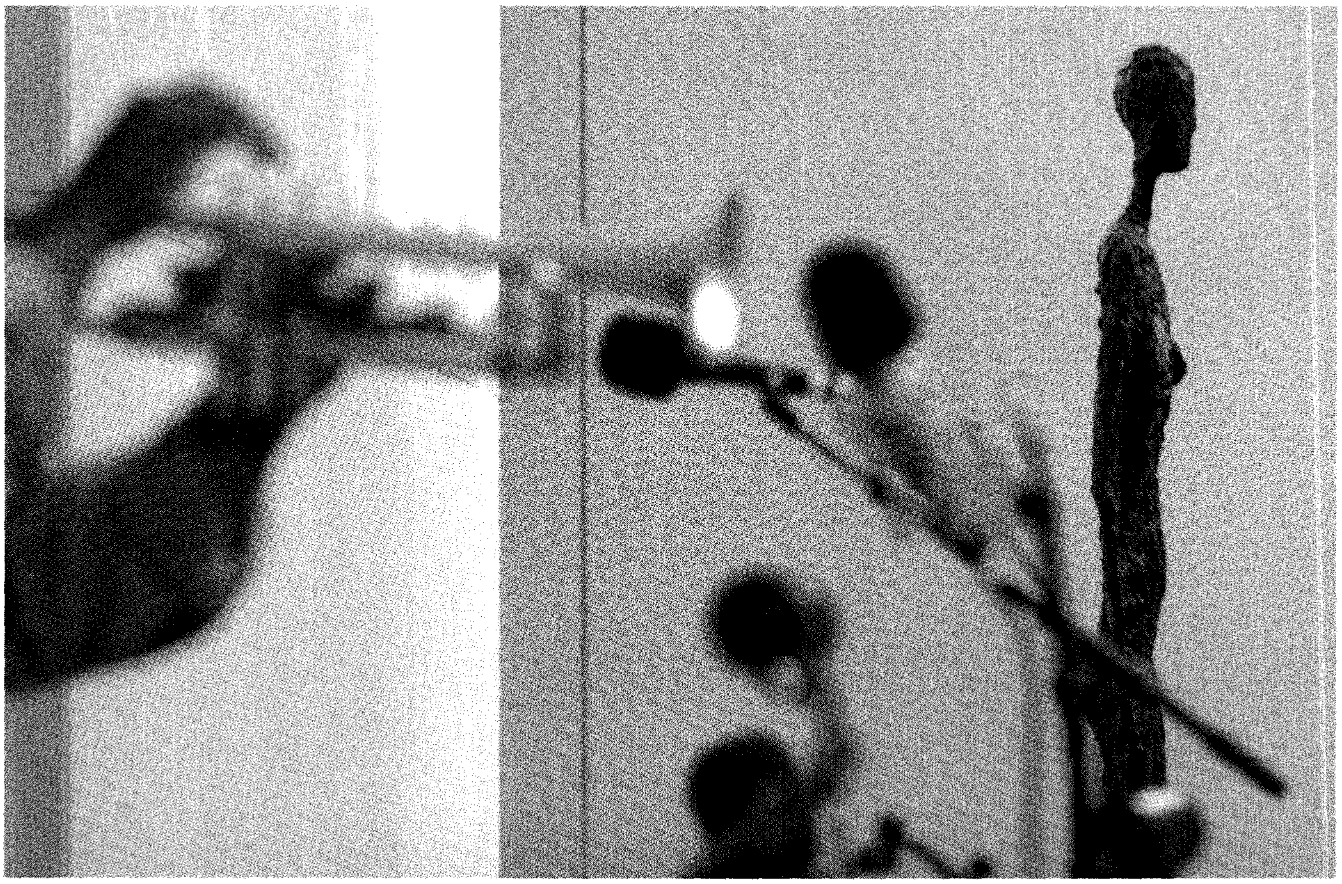

MOMA's "Summergarden" concert series. Photograph by Gus Powell.

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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THIS WEEK

NIGHT LIFE
IT TAKES TWO

For the "Charlie Haden Invitation" series, at the Blue Note, the lyrical jazz bassist spends the week engaged in duets with a string of pianists. Ethan Iverson, Kenny Barron, Steve Kuhn, Paul Bley, and Bill Charlap join him on separate nights. (See page 9.)

ART
LION IN SUMMER

The septuagenarian American artist Dorothy Iannone, whose free-spirited, erotically charged work was a high point of the 2006 Whitney Biennial—and who smuggled Henry Miller's novels into the U.S. in the early sixties—makes her solo museum début in this country, at the New Museum, in "Dorothy Iannone: Lioness." (See page 10.)

DANCE
HOOFER HOOKUP

In the mid-nineties, when young Savion Glover was changing tap dance with "Bring in 'da Noise, Bring in 'da Funk," Jason Samuels Smith was an even younger acolyte. These days, Smith has arguably outstripped Glover in influence over the coming generation. He brings a crew of fresh marvels, mostly female, and a swinging band to Jacob's Pillow for two weeks. (See page 12.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC
SPANISH HOURS

Caramoor's Spanish Courtyard is the most intimate and evocative concert space around in the summer months. This week the Caramoor Virtuosi—a band that includes such sterling young musicians as the cellists Sophie Shao and Edward Arron—offer two evenings of chamber music by Mozart, Mendelssohn, Menotti, and Franck. (See page 13.)

MOVIES
NICHT BRÜNO

The Austrian director Ulrich Seidl's sardonic documentary portraits resonate like cleverly crafted fictions, and his fictions are constructed, documentary style, of the stuff of daily life. Anthology Film Archives' retrospective of his work culminates in the première of his latest feature, "Import Export." (See page 16.)

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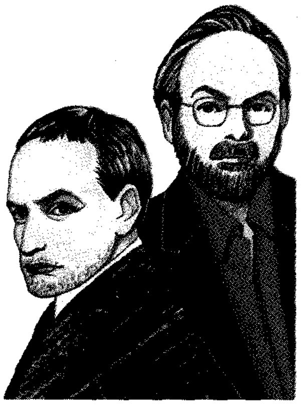
CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK
HEY '09

Steely Dan is a band that could not come to be now. During the seventies and early eighties, Donald Fagen and Walter Becker created tricksy, extra-credit songs



full of jazz learning and recorded them meticulously with session musicians capable of playing at any level, though not usually asked to work to Fagen and Becker's unforgiving specs. The lyrics were generally jaded assessments of young women, the older men who coveted them, and other humans caught at their least flattering moments. Steely Dan's original records are creepy and astonishing—they are models of surprise, intricacy, and slick surfaces. The group rarely toured and disbanded in 1981, but Fagen and Becker reunited in the early nineties, released a pair of records, and are now playing several of their classic albums in their entirety on their "Rent Party '09" tour. Would anybody this smart and cynical go into music now, especially given that the money is in touring rather than studio work? We will need to monitor the sourest young prodigies to find the answer.

—*Sasha Frere-Jones*

THE THEATRE
OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.

BORIS GODUNOV
At the Lincoln Center Festival, Declan Donnellan directs the Chekhov International Theatre Festival production of the play by Alexander Pushkin, about the politics of tsarist Russia. In Russian with English supertitles. July 22-26. (Park Avenue Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St. 212-721-6500.)

BURN THE FLOOR
The Broadway season kicks off with this showcase of ballroom and Latin dance, conceived, directed, and choreographed by Jason Gilkison, starring Maksim Chmerkovskiy and Karina Smirnoff, of "Dancing with the Stars" fame. Previews begin July 25. (Longacre, 220 W. 48th St. 212-239-6200.)

LOS GRUMILDOS
A burlesque fairy-tale puppet show, created by the Peruvian artist Ety Fefer. Opens July 28. (HERE Arts Center, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 212-352-3101.)

A LIFETIME BURNING
Primary Stages celebrates its twenty-fifth anniversary with a season of female playwrights, beginning with a world première by Cusi Cram, in which two sisters clash after one of them falsifies her memoir. Starring Jennifer Westfeldt, Raul Castillo, Isabel Keating, and Christina Kirk. Pam MacKinnon directs. Previews begin July 28. (59E59, at 59 E. 59th St. 212-279-4200.)

SLIPPING
Kirsten Kelly directs a drama, by Daniel Talbott, about a high-school senior who moves from San Francisco to Iowa, where he becomes obsessed with the school's most popular jock. Previews begin July 28. (Rattlestick, 224 Waverly Pl. 212-868-4444.)

SUMMER SHORTS 3
The annual festival includes William Inge's "The Killing," which has never been produced before. Opens July 24. (59E59, at 59 E. 59th St. 212-279-4200.)

TRILOGIA DELLA VILLEGGIATURA
Piccolo Teatro di Milano and Teatri Uniti di Napoli present a three-part satire of middle-class Italian life from 1761, by Carlo Goldoni, as part of the Lincoln Center Festival. Toni Servillo ("Gomorrah," "Il Divo") directs and stars. In Italian with English supertitles. July 22-26. (Rose Theatre, Broadway at 60th St. 212-721-6500.)

WILDFLOWER
Second Stage's "Uptown Series" continues with a première by Lila Rose Kaplan, about a woman and her son, who attempt to break out of their small-town life. Giovanna Sardelli directs. In previews. Opens July 27. (McGinn/Cazale, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. 212-246-4422.)

WONDER/LUST
Andrew Ondrejcak conceived and directs this exploration of the themes of "King Kong." July 22-25. (HERE Arts Center, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 212-352-3101.)

NOW PLAYING

ART OF MEMORY
Company SoGoNo presents an experimental comedy by Lisa Ramirez, narrated by four librarians. Tanya Calamoneri directs. (3LD Art & Technology Center, 80 Greenwich St. 212-352-3101.)

DRACULA!
Moose Hall Theatre Company presents this drama, adapted from Bram Stoker's novel, as part of its annual Inwood Shakespeare Festival, alfresco and free of charge. Ted Minos directs. (Inwood Hill Park Peninsula, enter at Indian Rd. at W. 218th St. 212-567-5255.)

EAST TO EDINBURGH FESTIVAL
Shows heading to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe play here first. The lineup includes "Jeff Kreisler's Get Rich Cheating," written and performed by Kreisler, and Susan Stein's "Etty," directed by Austin Pendleton. (59E59, at 59 E. 59th St. 212-279-4200.)

ICE FACTORY FESTIVAL
SoHo Think Tank's annual procession of new works continues with a musical, "Babes in Toyland," presented by the Little Lord Fauntleroys and based on the 1903 original by Glen MacDonough. (Ohio, 66 Wooster St. 212-868-4444.)

LIFE AND FATE
Maly Drama Theatre, from St. Petersburg, offers an adaptation of Vasily Grossman's novel, set in the early nineteen-forties, about a woman in a Jewish ghetto in Ukraine. Lev Dodin adapted and directs, as part of the Lincoln Center Festival. In Russian with English supertitles. (Gerald W. Lynch Theatre, John Jay College, Tenth Ave. at 58th St. 212-721-6500. Through July 26.)

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM
The Drilling Company opens its sixteenth Shakespeare in the Parking Lot season with this romantic comedy, free of charge, on the Lower East Side. (Parking lot on the corner of Ludlow and Broome Sts. 212-877-0099. Through July 25.)

MOTHER
Fights flare up and fizzle, someone does or doesn't get kidnapped, and folks get lost, found, and nearly lost again in just over an hour—and yet nothing really happens in Lisa Ebersole's tediously elliptical morsel of a new play, about a dysfunctional family's holiday dinner gone quirkily (and, apparently, typically) awry. Ebersole has tried to craft a slice-of-life portrait of a bickering band of eccentrics, but, in spite of the efforts of an illustrious cast (including Buck Henry, Holland Taylor, and Keith Randolph Smith), the stilted writing and strained humor cripple this enterprise from the start. (The Wild Project, 195 E. 3rd St. 212-352-3101.)

PEASANT OPERA
Béla Pintér and Company (from Budapest) present the U.S. première of a play by Pintér—with folk music composed by Benedek Darvas—about the comedic travails of two families, at the Lincoln Center Festival. In Hungarian with English supertitles. (Clark Studio Theatre, W. 65th St. and Amsterdam Ave. 212-721-6500. Through July 26.)

SUMMER PLAY FESTIVAL
At the Public, the annual short-play festival includes works by Ken Urban, Zayd Dohrn, Rick Viede, and Nicki Bloom. (425 Lafayette St. 212-967-7555.)

THE TIN PAN ALLEY RAG
Early in Mark Saltzman's musical, presented by the Roundabout, Irving Berlin (Michael Therriault) describes what makes a hit song: "It's got to please everyone—your uncle, the ice man, the lady who cleans the office." The show seems to have similar aspirations: it's simple, inoffensive, and eager to please. But at moments it resembles a singing encyclopedia entry. Soon Scott Joplin (Michael Boatman), Berlin's fellow ragtime pioneer, walks through the door, and they forge a (completely fictitious) bond. The two composers swap memories, peppered with songs, and Joplin teaches Berlin an important lesson in artistic integrity. The presence of so many timeless songs only reminds us what Berlin and Joplin could do that Saltzman doesn't: write from the heart without falling back on cliché. (Laura Pels, 111 W. 46th St. 212-719-1300.)

UNDERGROUNDZERO FESTIVAL
At P.S. 122, the third annual festival of experimental theatre includes works by TerraNOVA Collective, Kyle Jarrow, and Blessed Unrest, among many others. (First Ave. at 9th St. 212-352-3101. Through July 26.)

VANITIES
The New York première of Jack Heifner's 2006 musical (with music and lyrics by David Kirshenbaum), directed by Judith Ivey, covers, in ninety-five minutes, several decades in the lives of three Texas cheerleaders. The play is broken up into four stages—most popular girls in high school (1963); sorority sisters (1968); early midlife crises, including alcoholism, infidelity, and Repub-

AKIKO KATO

licanism (1974); and the resolution of all that ("years later")—that's about twenty-four minutes per segment, including titillating costume changes and jaunty song-and-dance routines. So there's not much time for exploration of story line and character, let alone context: was that the Vietnam War, first-wave feminism, and Watergate that just flew by, or a bobby pin? Despite the trite handling of important issues and the shallow portraits of the women as feisty nincompoops, there are some very funny bits here, and the three actresses—Lauren Kennedy, Sarah Stiles, and Anneliese van der Pol—all with beautiful voices, put everything they have into their performances. (Second Stage, 307 W. 43rd St. 212-246-4422.)

OUT OF TOWN

BARD SUMMERSCAPE
Gregory Thompson directs Aeschylus' "Oresteia" trilogy—"Agamemnon," "Choephori," and "The Eumenides"—translated by Ted Hughes. Also, the Spiegeltent returns to the Bard grounds, with appearances by Justin Bond, Cynthia Hopkins, Taylor Mac, the Bindlestiff Family Cirkus, the Wau Wau Sisters, and the roller-skating comic Amy G. (Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts, Annandale-on-Hudson, N.Y. 845-758-7900.)

BAY STREET THEATRE
David Esbjornson directs Moira Buffini's dinner-party satire "Dinner"; the cast includes Reed Birney, J. Smith Cameron, and Mercedes Ruehl. For more information, visit www.baystreet.org. (Sag Harbor, N.Y. 631-725-9500.)

BERKSHIRE THEATRE FESTIVAL
At the Unicorn, Ralph Petillo directs "Candide"; on the Main Stage, Warner Shook directs Neil Simon's "Prisoner of Second Avenue," starring Veanne Cox. For more information, visit www.berkshiretheatre.org. (Stockbridge, Mass. 413-298-5576.)

HUDSON VALLEY SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL
On the grounds of Boscobel, Terrence O'Brien directs Shakespeare's "Pericles, Prince of Tyre," in repertory with "Much Ado About Nothing" and "The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)." For more information, visit www.hvshakespeare.org. (Garrison, N.Y. 845-265-9575.)

WILLIAMSTOWN THEATRE FESTIVAL
On the Main Stage through July 26, Daniel Goldstein directs Sam Shepard's "True West," starring Nate Corddry and Paul Sparks. On the Nikos Stage, Justin Waldman directs Noah Haidle's "What Is the Cause of Thunder?," starring Betty Gilpin and Wendie Malick. For more information, visit www.wtfestival.org. (Williamstown, Mass. 413-597-3400.)

Also Playing

AVENUE Q: Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200. **BILLY ELLIOT THE MUSICAL:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200. **CHICAGO:** Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 212-239-6200. **GOD OF CARNAGE:** Jacobs, 242 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200. Through July 26. **HAIR: THE AMERICAN TRIBAL LOVE-ROCK MUSICAL:** Hirschfeld, 302 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200. **IN THE HEIGHTS:** Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 212-307-4100. **JERSEY BOYS:** August Wilson, 245 W. 52nd St. 212-239-6200. **KRAPP, 39:** SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. 212-691-1555. **THE LION KING:** Minskoff, 200 W. 45th St. 212-307-4747. **THE LITTLE MERMAID:** Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 212-307-4747. **MAMMA MIA!:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 212-239-6200. **MARY POPPINS:** New Amsterdam, 214 W. 42nd St. 212-307-4747. **MARY STUART:** Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200. **NEXT FALL:** Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 212-279-4200. **NEXT TO NORMAL:** Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200. **9 TO 5: THE MUSICAL:** Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 212-239-6200. **THE NORMAN CONQUESTS:** Circle in the Square, 235 W. 50th St. 212-239-6200. Through July 26. **OUR TOWN:** Barrow Street Theatre, 27 Barrow St. 212-868-4444. **ROCK OF AGES:** Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 212-307-4100. **RUINED:** City Center Stage I, 131 W. 55th St. 212-581-1212. **SHREK THE MUSICAL:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 212-239-6200. **SOUTH PACIFIC:** Vivian Beaumont, 150 W. 65th St. 212-239-6200. **SWEET STORM:** Kirk, 410 W. 42nd St. 212-279-4200. **THE 39 STEPS:** Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200. **THE TOXIC AVENGER:** New World Stages, 340 W. 50th St. 212-239-6200. **WEST SIDE STORY:** Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 212-239-6200. **WICKED:** Gershwin, 222 W. 51st St. 212-239-6200.

NIGHT LIFE
ROCK AND POP

Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.

B. B. KING BLUES CLUB & GRILL
237 W. 42nd St. (212-997-4144)—July 24: **Kool & the Gang** celebrate forty years of good times.

THE BELL HOUSE
149 7th St., between Second and Third Aves., Brooklyn (718-643-6510)—July 25: **John Wesley Harding,** the English singer-songwriter (and novelist, under his given name, Wesley Stace).

BOWERY BALLROOM
6 Delancey St. (212-533-2111)—July 24: The Rhode Island band **Deer Tick** salutes the release of its second album, "Born on Flag Day," which continues its honorable attempt to revitalize indie rock with a look back at traditional folk and country. The formula's been used before, but the band's earnest approach shines through. July 25: **Satanicide** lovingly exhumes the silliest elements of eighties heavy metal.

BOWERY POETRY CLUB
308 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (212-614-0505)—July 25: "Double Nickels on the Dime," by the seminal American punk trio the Minutemen, is one of the greatest albums of the eighties. The two-LP set, an ambitious collision of rock, punk, jazz, and incisively intelligent lyrics (its title was a wry response to Sammy Hagar's über-macho hit, "I Can't Drive 55"), came out one year before the band collapsed following the death of its lead singer and guitarist, D. Boon, in a car crash. The original Minutemen member and tirelessly affable bass player **Mike Watt** celebrates the album's twenty-fifth anniversary with a multimedia tribute featuring an array of artists and performers.

CAKE SHOP
152 Ludlow St. (212-253-0036)—July 23: **Yellow Fever,** an indie-pop outfit from Austin, has a satisfyingly sparse approach. Jennifer Moore's deep vocals are supported by an insistent drumbeat and a minimalist bass line. **Air Waves,** the singer-songwriter Nicole Schneit's searing, rustic threesome, is also on the bill.

CELEBRATE BROOKLYN!
Prospect Park W. at 9th St. (718-855-7882, ext. 45)—July 24: Direct from New Orleans, it's **Buckwheat Zydeco.** With the **Holmes Brothers.**

CENTRAL PARK SUMMERSTAGE
Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. (212-360-2777)—July 24: The veteran soul singer **Bettye LaVette,** who can suggest a heartbroken wail through a whisper and make a slow ballad pulse like scorching gospel rock. With the **Budos Band.**

MADISON SQUARE GARDEN
Seventh Ave. at 33rd St. (800-745-3000)—July 27-28: After years of writing paeans to teen angst and masturbation, the Berkeley punk trio **Green Day** headed in an unlikely direction, focussing on post-9/11 life under the Bush Administration. The result, 2004's "American Idiot," was a Clash-inspired concept album that vaulted the band into the generational-spokespersons chair. Five years and one pivotal election later, Green Day returns with an equally ambitious rock opera, "21st Century Breakdown."

THE MARKET HOTEL
1142 Myrtle Ave., at Broadway, Brooklyn (no phone)—July 24: **Extreme Animals,** an offshoot of art collective Paper Rad, messily appropriates commercial hip-hop and electro-punk elements. The duo garner as much inspiration from viral YouTube videos as they do from nineties rave aesthetics, creating a simultaneous critique and celebration of the sheer insanity of the nascent Internet youth culture. Their live shows are a blast of ecstatic howls and vibrant synthesizers, generally accompanied by twenty-somethings pogo-dancing around the scruffy twosome.

"THE POOL PARTIES"
Previously staged in the crumbling foundations of the McCarren Park Pool, these free concerts have a new home featuring a stunning view of the Manhattan skyline. As in the past, the events include a barbecue, open games of basketball, and the highly competitive dodgeball matches that helped make them a seasonal institution. July 26: The high-octane garage of the **Black Lips,** the discordant noise pop of **Health,** and the pounding, orchestrated rock of **. . . And You Will Know Us by the Trail of Dead.** (East River State Park, 90 Kent Ave., at N. 9th St., Brooklyn. For more information, visit www.thepoolparties.com.)

SANTOS PARTY HOUSE
96 Lafayette St. (212-584-5492)—July 28: **YACHT** (the name is an acronym for Young Americans Challenging Higher Technology), a boy-girl electro-pop duo out of Portland, Oregon, revels in a quirky sensibility. Their music is artisanal cotton candy: one part Tom Tom Club, one part Yoko Ono. They're here July 28 celebrating the release of a new album, "See Mystery Lights."

SCULPTURECENTER
44-19 Purves St., Long Island City (718-361-1750)—The center, which was founded in Manhattan in 1928 as the Clay Club and which moved to Queens in 2001, has started a summer concert series. These shows are being put on in conjunction with "The University of Trash," an experimental exhibition revolving around alternative architecture, and they continue on July 25 with the psychedelic drone of Brooklyn's **Religious Knives.** The Portland, Oregon, quintet **Little Claw** is also on the bill.

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART
Madison Ave. at 75th St. (212-570-3600)—July 24: Brooklyn's trippy folk outfit **Woods,** whose haunting, sweet music pops and crackles with the nostalgia of an old record. With **Yellow Fever** (see Cake Shop.) This performance is part of a series of concerts connected to the conceptual artist Dan Graham's current retrospective.

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

BIRDLAND
315 W. 44th St. (212-581-3080)—July 22-25: The alto saxophonist **Lee Konitz** beefs up his quartet with the drummer **Paul Motian,** a fellow jazz luminary who, like Konitz, seems to take more musical chances the older he gets.

BLUE NOTE
131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (212-475-8592)—July 21-26: The **"Charlie Haden Invitation"** series pairs the brilliant bassist with a slew of exceptional pianists, including **Ethan Iverson,** of the Bad Plus (on July 21), **Steve Kuhn** (July 22), **Kenny Barron** (July 23-24), **Paul Bley** (July 25), and **Bill Charlap** (July 26).

DIZZY'S CLUB COCA-COLA
Broadway at 60th St. (212-258-9595)—July 21-26: The historically minded pianist **Marcus Roberts.** July 27: The guitarist and singer **Howard Fishman** swings by with his **Biting Fish Brass Band.**

"JAZZ IN JULY"
The pianist and artistic director **Bill Charlap** has once again programmed a smart series that balances thematic concerns with forthright musicianship. It gets under way on July 21 with "Sondheim & Styne," which brings together the singer

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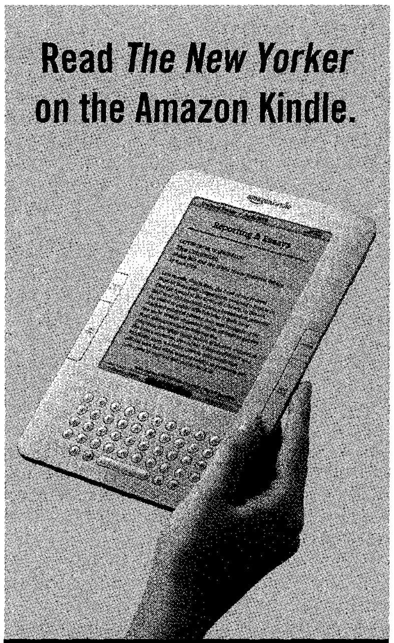

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Kurt Elling and an all-star band to examine the jazz potential in the work of two famed Broadway composers. July 22: "A Helluva Town: New York Jazz" takes the metropolis as its guide to song selection. July 23: "Piano Jam: With Respect to Oscar" is a tribute to the late Oscar Peterson with Charlap, **Mulgrew Miller, Renee Rosnes, Eric Reed,** and others. July 27: "The Gerry Mulligan Songbook" focusses on the work of the illustrious saxophonist. July 28: "It's Jazz, Charlie Brown: The Music of Vince Guaraldi" calls on the popular songs of the pianist who is best remembered for writing the music that accompanied the animated adaptations of the "Peanuts" comic strip. July 30: "Saxophone Summit" collects the noted reedmen **Jimmy Heath, Phil Woods, Steve Wilson, Harry Allen,** and **Jimmy Greene.** (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 212-415-5500.)

JAZZ STANDARD
116 E. 27th St. (212-576-2232)—July 21-26: The imposing trumpeter and film composer **Terence Blanchard,** a native of New Orleans, has displayed increased expressive depth since the release of his album "A Tale of God's Will (A Requiem for Katrina)," in 2007. His forthcoming album, "Choices," includes vocal contributions from the neo-soul singer Bilal and the academic Cornel West.

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9400)—July 26: The **Si o Si Quartet,** spotlights the compositions and marvellous playing of the Cuban drummer **Dafnis Prieto.**

VILLAGE VANGUARD
178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (212-255-4037)—July 21-26: The **Fred Hersch** trio. Hersch, a lyrical pianist whose latest recording is a solo project of Jobim interpretations, appears here with the bassist **John Hébert** and the drummer **Eric McPherson.**

ART
MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (212-535-7710)—**"Afghanistan: Hidden Treasures from the National Museum, Kabul."** Through Sept. 20. ♦ **"Francis Bacon: A Centenary Retrospective."** Through Aug. 16. ♦ **"The Pictures Generation, 1974-1984."** Through Aug. 2. ♦ **"Michelangelo's First Painting."** Through Sept. 7. ♦ **"Roxy Paine on the Roof: Maelstrom."** Through Oct. 25. ♦ **"Pen and Parchment: Drawing in the Middle Ages."** Through Aug. 23. ♦ **"Napoleon III and Paris."** Through Sept. 7. ♦ **"Augustus Saint-Gaudens in the Metropolitan Museum of Art."** Through Oct. 12. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9400)—**"In & Out of Amsterdam: Travels in Conceptual Art, 1960-1976."** Through Oct. 5. ♦ **"James Ensor."** Through Sept. 21. ♦ **"Compass in Hand: Selections from the Judith Rothschild Foundation Contemporary Drawings Collection."** Through Jan. 4. ♦ **"Projects 90: Song Dong."** Through Sept. 21. ♦ **"Looking at Music: Side 2."** Through Nov. 30. ♦ **"Aernout Mik."** Through July 27. ♦ **"Performance 4: Roman Ondák."** Through Sept. 14. (Open Wednesdays through Mondays, 10:30 to 5:30, and Friday evenings until 8.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (212-423-3500)—**"Frank Lloyd Wright: From Within Outward."** Through Aug. 23. (Open Fridays, and Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 5:45, and Saturdays, 10 to 7:45.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART
Madison Ave. at 75th St. (212-570-3600)—**"Dan Graham: Beyond."** Through Oct. 11. ♦ **"Claes Oldenburg: Early Sculpture, Drawings, and Happenings Films."** Through Sept. 6. ♦ **"Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen: The Music Room."** Through Sept. 6. ♦ **"Sadie Benning: Play Pause."** Through Sept. 20. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and weekends, 11 to 6, and Fridays, 1 to 9.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM
200 Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—**"Yinka Shonibare MBE."** Through Sept. 20. ♦ **"Patricia Cronin: Harriet Hosmer, Lost and Found."** Through Jan. 24. ♦ **"Light of the Sufis: The Mystical Arts of Islam."** Through Sept. 6. ♦ **"Reflections in the Electric Mirror: New Feminist Video."** Through Jan. 10. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5, and Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
Central Park W. at 79th St. (212-769-5100)—**"Extreme Mammals: The Biggest, Smallest, and Most Amazing Mammals of All Time."** Through Jan. 3. ♦ **"Climate Change: The Threat to Life and a New Energy Future."** Through Aug. 16. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45.)

AMERICAN FOLK ART MUSEUM
45 W. 53rd St. (212-265-1040)—**"Kaleidoscope Quilts: The Art of Paula Nadelstern."** Through Sept. 13. ♦ **"The Treasure of Ulysses Davis."** Through Sept. 6. (Tuesdays through Sundays, 10:30 to 5:30, and Friday evenings until 7:30.)

CHELSEA ART MUSEUM
556 W. 22nd St. (212-255-0719)—**"Iran Inside Out."** Through Sept. 5. (Tuesdays through Saturdays, noon to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8.)

COOPER-HEWITT NATIONAL DESIGN MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 91st St. (212-849-8300)—**"Design for a Living World."** Through Jan. 4. (Open Mondays through Thursdays, 10 to 5, Fridays, 10 to 9, Saturdays, 10 to 6, and Sundays, noon to 6.)

FASHION INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
Seventh Ave. at 27th St. (212-217-5800)—**"Isabel Toledo: Fashion from the Inside Out."** Through Sept. 26. (Tuesdays through Fridays, noon to 8, and Saturdays, 10 to 5.)

FRICK COLLECTION
1 E. 70th St. (212-288-0700)—**"Portraits, Pastels, Prints: Whistler in the Frick Collection."** Through Aug. 23. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6, and Sundays, 11 to 5.)

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY
1133 Sixth Ave., at 43rd St. (212-857-0000)—**"Avedon Fashion 1944-2000."** Through Sept. 6. ♦ **"David Seidner: Paris Fashions, 1945."** Through Sept. 6. ♦ **"John Wood: Quiet Protest."** Through Sept. 20. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 10 to 6, and Friday evenings until 8.)

JEWISH MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. (212-423-3200)—**"They Called Me Mayer July: Painted Memories of a Jewish Childhood in Poland Before the Holocaust."** Through Oct. 1. ♦ **"Reclaimed: Paintings from the Collection of Jacques Goudstikker."** Through Aug. 2. (Open Thursdays to Tuesdays, 11 to 5:45, and Fridays, 11 to 4.)

MORGAN LIBRARY & MUSEUM
225 Madison Ave., at 36th St. (212-685-0008)—**"Creating the Modern Stage: Designs for Theatre and Opera."** Through Aug. 16. ♦ **"Pages of Gold: Medieval Illuminations from the Morgan."** Through Sept. 15. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, 10:30 to 5, Fridays, 10:30 to 9, Saturdays, 10 to 6, and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
Fifth Ave. at 103rd St. (212-534-1672)—**"Dutch Seen: New York Rediscovered."** Through Sept. 13. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

NEW MUSEUM
235 Bowery, at Prince St. (212-219-1222)—**"Intersections Intersected: The Photography of David Goldblatt."** Through Oct. 11. ♦ **"Rigo 23: The Deeper They Bury Me, the Louder My Voice Becomes."** Through Oct. 21. ♦ **"Dorothy Iannone: Lioness."** Opens July 22. ♦ **"Emory Douglas: Black Panther."** Opens July 22. (Open Wednesdays and weekends, noon to 6, and Thursdays and Fridays, noon to 10.)

NOGUCHI MUSEUM
9-01 33rd Rd., at Vernon Blvd., Long Island City (718-784-7088)—**"Noguchi Reinstalled."** Through Oct. 24. (Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5, and weekends, 11 to 6.)

STUDIO MUSEUM IN HARLEM
144 W. 125th St. (212-864-4500)—**"Hurvin Anderson."** Through Oct. 25. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, and Sundays, noon to 6, and Saturdays, 10 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

TOD PAPAGEORGE
In 1970, when the country was at war with Vietnam, Papageorge travelled across the United States to take photographs of sporting events, including the World Series, the Indianapolis 500, and the Iron Bowl. More than forty images from that project—all in crisp, no-nonsense black-and-white—focus on spectators and players in the sort of chaotic moments that don't lend themselves to pretty pictures. Papageorge doesn't attempt to mold these events into balanced compositions; he lets them sprawl and tangle but never slacken. Every inch of his photographs counts; nothing feels extraneous. Which may be why they feel so fraught, so tensed up. The war is elsewhere, but it casts a shadow here, and no one escapes it. Through Aug. 28. (Pace MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. 212-759-7999.)

Short List

CAROL BOVE: Horticultural Society of New York, 148 W. 37th St. 212-757-0915. Through Sept. 10. **DIAS & RIEDWEG:** Americas Society, Park Ave. at 68th St. 212-249-8950. Through Aug. 1. **PAUL HIMMEL:** De Lellis, 1045 Madison Ave., at 80th St. 212-327-1482. Through Aug. 28.

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

ANITA STECKEL
Steckel's works from the early sixties are acerbic, stripped-down photomontages that update the techniques pioneered by Dadaists like Hannah Hoch and John Heartfield. Steckel altered a vintage wedding photograph so that a bride is joined with a death-mask groom; Venus de Milo becomes a ghoul with elongated, Edward Gorey-like arms; and a peaches-and-cream Madonna nurses a dark-skinned infant. In "The Company Picnic," a motley, slave-era crowd frolics in a frothy rococo landscape. The show's only misstep is the press release, which emphasizes Steckel's romantic relationships (including one with Marlon Brando), a move that runs counter to the feminist triumph of her work. Through July 31. (Algus, 511 W. 25th St. 212-242-6242.)

BASIL WOLVERTON
The name may be unfamiliar, but one look at Wolverton's drawings—hilariously angsty masterpieces of the gross-out variety, full of bloodshot eyeballs and boils—and you'll recognize both his genius and his sway. R. Crumb and Peter Saul both acknowledge their debt; Ed Ruscha has named Wolverton as his earliest influence. For his début at Gladstone's New York gallery, the canny neo-Conceptualist Cameron Jamie curates a selection of dozens of pen- and graphite-on-paper drawings by the self-taught contributor to *MAD* and *Life* magazines, as well as a revelatory selection of his sci-fi drawings from the thirties. The future has rarely looked more out-there. Through Aug. 14. (Gladstone, 515 W. 24th St. 212-206-9300.)

"AFTER COLOR"
Curator Amani Olu has pulled together nine contemporary artists who work with black-and-white photography and photo-based imagery. Their styles vary radically, but they all have a conceptual bent and very little interest in traditional photography. Some of the most interesting work—Talia Chetrit's hard-edged, computer-generated geometries; Matthew Camber's expressionist chalkboards; Arthur Ou's violently splattered seascapes—flirts with or actively engages abstraction. Stephen Gill's witty still-life studies mine the sculptural potential of discarded betting slips, and Adrien Missika, shooting the Grand Canyon through a tourist telescope, discovers ghostly new planets suspended in the void. Through Aug. 21. (Bose Pacia, 508 W. 26th St. 212-989-7074.)

"ARCADIA"
Working primarily with the gallery's own stable of photographers (and one painter), Clamp explores the idea of a pastoral paradise. If Eden has always been illusory, artists have never tired of imagining it, some with idealized views of the natural landscape (see Frank Yamrus, Marc Yankus, and Aziz + Cucher), others with a sly wink and a lot of artifice. Lori Nix's waterfall and secluded mountain lake were fabricated in her studio, and James Bidgood's seductive Pan, who pipes visitors in at the entrance, perches in a forest of papier-mâché and paint. Stephen Wilkes's pristine rural baseball diamond only looks fake; the actual site of the film "Field of Dreams," its perfection has been preserved for tourists. Through Aug. 14. (ClampArt, 521-531 W. 25th St. 646-230-0020.)

"DISCOVERIES"
Galleries have more incentives than usual this year to ransack their inventories for buried gems to see them through the slow summer months, but there's no air of desperation here. Silverstein promises a "special selection of extraordinary photographs" and delivers, with fine works by a slew of modern masters, including Stieglitz, Weston, Callahan, Levitt, Outerbridge, and Arbus. The mix is stimulating and unpredictable; not every photographer is already museum-certified, but virtually every print is, as promised, remarkable. Look for Magritte's tiny "Self-Portrait in His Studio," Kertesz's famous drooping tulip, signed over and over in the white margins, and an unusual trio of Siskind divers in midair, blurred into smudged abstractions. Through Aug. 7. (Silverstein, 535 W. 24th St. 212-627-3930.)

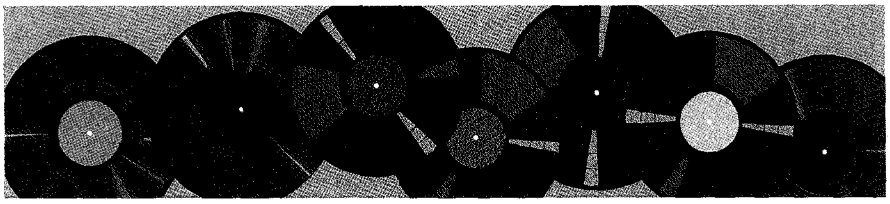
"SLOUGH"
The title "Abiogenesis" might have been too portentous for summer, but art emerging from primordial ooze is the drift of this rambunctious show of works by thirty-four artists (from bigwigs like Andy Warhol to young guns like Pat McElnea), organized by the painter Steve DiBenedetto. Margins trump centers. One high point, while technically in the show, is outside it: Keith Edmier's window installation of a living cycad plant sprouting from a slab of hardened lava. As you enter, the tarnished glamour of a small silver painting by Cheryl Donegan sets a louche tone that gives way to debauchery in Fabian Marcaccio's aggressively repellent polychrome homage to vomit. Through July 24. (Nolan, 527 W. 29th St. 212-925-6190.)

Short List

KEREN CYTTER / LUKE FOWLER / TRIS VONNA-MICHELL: X Initiative, 548 W. 22nd St. 917-697-4886. Through Sept. 19. **GUYTON\WALKER:** Greene Naftali, 508 W. 26th St. 212-463-7770. Through Aug. 7. **DOROTHY IANNONE:** Kern, 532 W. 20th St. 212-367-9663. Through Aug. 14. **SCOTT REEDER:** Reich, 537A W. 23rd St. 212-924-4949. Through Aug. 29. **"DAUGHTERS OF THE REVOLUTION: WOMEN & COLLAGE":** Zoubok, 533 W. 23rd St. 212-675-7490. Through Aug. 14. **"NAKED!":** Kasmin, 293 Tenth Ave. 212-563-4474. Through Sept. 19. **"A SENSED PERTURBATION":** Murray Guy, 453 W. 17th St. 212-463-7372. Through July 31. **"6 WORKS, 6 ROOMS":** Zwirner, 533 W. 19th St. 212-727-2070. Through Aug. 14. **"SUMMER PICTURES":** Saul, 535 W. 22nd St. 212-627-2410. Through Sept. 12.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

"COMMUNICATION COORDINATION CONSIDERATION"
The sculptor Nathan Carter rounds up three younger artists who share his buoyant approach to materials and his interest in codes. Emily Landon's bright plywood bestiary—painted cut-outs of life-sized bears, foxes, deer, egrets, and others—crowds the center of the gallery like a Seussian forest of signs. In Susan Rodriguez Gutierrez's elegant haiku of an installation, vinyl silhouettes of birds in flight create a shadow play on the gallery's wall and window. Best of all is Katie Murray's video of a Queens high-school drill squad performing a razor-sharp routine, edited from four years' worth of footage. Through July 31. (Werble, 83 Vandam St. 212-352-9700.)



STEVE POWERS

POP NOTES
CHEAP THRILLS

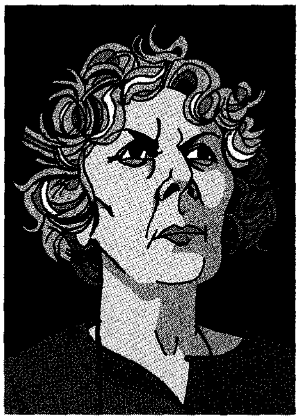
Cheap Trick's latest album is one of its trickiest yet, from the winking title (**"The Latest"**) on down. The first single, "When the Lights Are Out," is a cover of an old Slade song—an old cover of an old Slade song, actually, recorded in 1976 and rescued from the Cheap Trick vaults—that fits the original over the galloping drumbeat of the band's early hit "ELO Kiddies." Throughout, in fact, the group (still composed of the guitarist Rick Nielsen, the singer Robin Zander, the bassist Tom Petersson, and the drummer Bun E. Carlos) plays fast and loose with its own history. The sparkling "Miss Tomorrow" is a leftover from Zander's early-nineties solo career. "Everybody Knows," one of many songs in which the band, and particularly Zander, seems to be channelling John Lennon, makes a passing reference to the band's 1983 album, "Next Position Please." And the bruising "Sick Man of Europe" takes its name from the pre-Trick band that Rick Nielsen started in the early seventies.

Elsewhere, the group continues to do what it has always done, balancing delicate balladry ("Miracle," which has another highly Lennon-like vocal) with skewed popcraft ("Everyday You Make Me Crazy," which rushes by in less than two minutes and sounds like a commercial jingle). Sometimes, they do both in the same song: "Closer, the Ballad of Burt and Linda" is a soaring love song about Burton Pugach, the New York lawyer who spent fourteen years in prison for hiring thugs to throw lye in the face of his girlfriend and future wife, Linda Riss. And even this is a canny look in the rearview mirror. The band's début album, back in 1977, contained the "The Ballad of TV Violence (I'm Not the Only Boy)," a dark rocker that attempted to make sense of a twisted mind (it was originally titled "The Ballad of Richard Speck," after the Chicago mass murderer). Moving confidently into the future while remaining convincingly rooted in the past? Now that's a neat trick.

—*Ben Greenman*

CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK
SENSE MEMORY

While the socialist-minded seventy-year-old director Ariane Mnouchkine believes that her company, the illustrious Le Théâtre du Soleil, is a collaborative effort, her actors generally give it up to her. Which is only fitting: Mnouchkine has led them to the world stage. She formed her company in France in 1964; later, the government offered it the use of a former army training ground and ammunitions warehouse, La Cartoucherie, in Vincennes. Mnouchkine's politically infused, highly theatricalized directorial style borrows liberally—and joyfully—from Kabuki, commedia dell'arte, and Noh. Her latest piece, "Les Éphémères," which explores the intimacy of memory, opened the Lincoln Center Festival (which closes July 26). It was seven hours long—something like Douglas Sirk by way of Robert Wilson—which contributed to the effect of the conscious dreams that Mnouchkine is intent on building, gesture by gesture. Sometimes the actors spoke and performed so softly you could hear them, in between cues, waiting to exhale.



—*Hilton Als*

Short List

CORY ARCANGEL / GUILLAUME PINARD / JON ROUTSON: Team, 83 Grand St. 212-279-9219. Through July 31. **THOMAS LAWSON:** Participant, Inc., 253 E. Houston St. 212-254-4334. Through July 26. **ZIN TAYLOR:** Abreu, 36 Orchard St. 212-995-1774. Through Aug. 2. **"HUMAN ARRANGEMENT":** Uffner, 47 Orchard St. 212-274-0064. Through Aug. 8. **"PHANTOM LIMB":** 179 Canal Street, 179 Canal St. 917-660-7332. Through Aug. 1. **"CHARACTER GENERATOR":** Eleven Rivington, 11 Rivington St. 212-982-1930. Through Aug. 14.

DANCE

PILOBOLUS
The illusionist-acrobat-dancers of Pilobolus return to the Joyce for their annual season with three rotating programs. For the first set, the Pilobolus co-founder Jonathan Wolken has produced "Redline," an exploration of the dramatic effects of physical combat; it will share the evening with "Darkness and Light," last year's collaboration with the puppeteer Basil Twist. The second program is headlined by "Dog•id," a collaboration with Steven Banks (the head writer for "SpongeBob SquarePants"), and also features the eye-bending solo "Pseudopodia," one of the company's earliest pieces, from 1973. Their association with the neo-surrealistic Israeli choreographers Inbal Pinto and Avshalom Pollak, which began in 2007 with "Rushes" (which is on Program 1), continues with "2b," set to everything from Bach to Hawaiian pop. (175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 212-242-0800. July 21-22 and July 27-28 at 7:30, July 23-24 at 8, and July 25 at 2 and 8. Through Aug. 8.)

NICHOLAS LEICHTER DANCE
As part of L.M.C.C.'s "Sitelines," Leichter and Monstah Black beam down from the mothership for "A Space Funk Invasion," at South Street Seaport. While channelling Parliament Funkadelic and pimps from outer space, the two experts in funk styles also throw in some pirate themes, à la Adam and the Ants, in honor of the site and in reference to current events. (Fulton St. at Front St. 212-219-9401. July 22 and July 27-28 at 6 and July 23 and July 30 at 1.)

"I LOVE TOMORROW"
The Twin Cities-based postmodernist choreographer Paula Mann presents a memoir of sorts with her new evening-length work, "I Love Tomorrow." Using plainspoken, unfussy choreography that includes walking, simple partnering, and quirky movements of the arms and torso, the dancers engage with projected images of themselves while bits of text, animation, and sounds waft around them. Mann's portrayal of memory is based on the notion of "backward causation," in which time (and thus structure) folds in upon itself, creating a sometimes fluid, sometimes jagged experience. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 212-924-0077. July 22-25 at 7:30.)

STEPHEN PETRONIO COMPANY
Outfitted in outré captain's garb by Cindy Sherman, Petronio summons a storm to Celebrate Brooklyn!: his tempestuous new "I Drink the Air Before Me." The title comes, in fact, from "The Tempest," the energy from a relentless score by Nico Muhly, leavened by the sweet voices of the Young People's Chorus of New York City. Even by Petronio standards, the dance is dizzying, aswirl with overlapping groups. His lucid dancers keep the turbulence clear to the eye. (Prospect Park Band Shell, Prospect Park W. at 9th St. 718-855-7882. July 23 at 8.)

WAAL VERSUS FLOOR
Amanda Waal is a collagist. Her evening-length solo "The Rules of Remembering" is a study of memory in twenty-seven parts, assembled from various music sources, text by Willa Cather and Annie Proulx, video footage both new and found, and paper sculptures of her own design. (Joyce SoHo, 155 Mercer St. 212-352-3101. July 23-25 at 8.)

OUT OF TOWN

JACOB'S PILLOW
With the hoofer Jason Samuels Smith (at the Doris Duke July 22–Aug. 2), astonishing speed and power get your attention; smooth physicality, continual invention, and brutal charm hold it. The name of his company—Anybody Can Get It—is a mark of his tap evangelism, and the young talent it includes makes a fine advertisement for the health of a tradition. Mixing solos and ensemble pieces, set routines and improvisation, the program is a family affair, featuring the percussion of Smith's father, Jo Jo, and the rapping of his cousin Ahmad Rashad, Jr. The pianist Theo Hill and the distinguished bassist Curtis Lundy keep things swinging. ♦ Merce Cunningham, enigmatic master of modern dance, turned ninety earlier this year, and revealed plans for the future that include the eventual dissolution of his company. Merce Cunningham Dance Company returns July 22-26 to the Ted Shawn, where it first appeared more than half a century ago. "CRWDSPCR" (1993) is a tightly concentrated, vigorously detailed dance, with bright costumes inspired by Russian Constructivism. "Sounddance" (1975) is an explosive whirlwind, suggesting the beginning of the world, propelled by a percussive score by David Tudor. Cunningham's delight with technology is the subject of "eyeSpace" (2006); audience members are encouraged to use iPods to shuffle through a customized score by Mikel Rouse while vibrantly dressed dancers form complex combinations. (Becket, Mass. 413-243-0745. Through Aug. 30.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC
CONCERTS IN TOWN

(LE) POISSON ROUGE: ALARM WILL SOUND
Alan Pierson's group, exuberant purveyors of new music on the post-minimalist spectrum, has become a favorite act at the downtown music club. Their next visit finds them performing one of their specialties—virtuoso acoustic renderings of electronic music by the likes of Autechre, Mochipet, and Aphex Twin. (158 Bleecker St. www.lprnyc.com. July 22 at 7:30 and 10:30.)

BARGEMUSIC
Nostalgia reigns at the floating chamber-music series this week. July 24 at 8: Paul Rosenthal and Doris Stevenson, on violin and piano, offer a program that Fritz Kreisler might have given, circa 1930—sonatas by Taneyev and Leclair, a suite by Sinding, and selected nuggets by the Master himself ("Tambourin Chinois" and an arrangement of an excerpt from Gluck's "Orfeo ed Euridice"). ♦ July 25 at 8 and July 26 at 3: The violist Mark Peskanov and the cellist Jeffrey Solow join Stevenson and Rosenthal in weightier fare, by Haydn, Schubert (the "Arpeggione" Sonata), and Brahms (the Piano Quartet in C Minor). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-2083.)

"TWO BY FOUR WITH THE RUHR"
Want to hear some classical music at the Lincoln Center Festival? Well, here's your chance: an evening in which the pianists Dennis Russell Davies (better known as a conductor) and Maki Namekawa offer the North American première of Philip Glass's "Four Movements for Two Pianos," a piece commissioned by the Ruhr Piano Festival. Four-hand music by such composers as Stravinsky, Steve Reich, and Chen Yi completes the program. (Alice Tully Hall. 212-721-6500. July 25 at 8.)

INTERNATIONAL KEYBOARD INSTITUTE AND FESTIVAL
Jerome Rose's annual series at Mannes College brings concerts, lectures, and master classes, all centered on the art of the piano. One of this week's highlights is a solo recital by the strikingly talented young Israeli pianist Alon Goldstein, bringing his serene touch to music by Bach,

JASHAR AWAN

Brahms, Beethoven (the Sonata No. 7 in D Major), Ginastera, and the Israeli composer Avner Dorman. (Mannes Concert Hall, 150 W. 85th St. July 25 at 8:30. 212-580-0210, ext. 4858. For full schedule, see www.ikif.org.)

MOSTLY MOZART FESTIVAL
This being 2009, works by Mozart's admired older colleague Joseph Haydn (who died exactly two hundred years ago) are prominently featured in this season's edition of the festival, which will also include substantial forays into the music of John Adams and J. S. Bach. Haydn's impassioned concert aria "Berenice, che fai?," sung by the formidable Alice Coote, graces the Mostly Mozart Orchestra's opening concerts, conducted by Louis Langrée; the program also includes Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 3 in C Minor (with Leif Ove Andsnes) and Mozart's Symphony No. 41, "Jupiter." (Avery Fisher Hall. 212-721-6500. July 28-29 at 8.)

OUT OF TOWN

TANGLEWOOD
July 22 at 8: Thomas Hampson, our leading advocate for serious American song, begins the week at Boston's musical duchy with a recital (accompanied by Craig Rutenberg) of music by such native masters as Barber, Griffes, and Ives. ♦ July 24 at 8:30: James Levine, another prominent figure this week, conducts his Boston Symphony Orchestra in music by two of the nineteenth century's wild men, Berlioz (the "Le Corsaire" Overture and "Harold in Italy") and Mussorgsky (including "Pictures at an Exhibition"). ♦ July 25 at 8:30: What a difference a day makes—Levine and the B.S.O. now turn to the weighty German rhetoric of Brahms's "German Requiem," featuring the baritone Matthias Goerne along with the Tanglewood Festival Chorus. ♦ July 26 at 2:30: David Robertson, the energetic conductor of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, joins Hampson, the pianist Orli Shaham, and the B.S.O. for another all-American outing, a concert offering Roy Harris's Symphony No. 3, songs by Barber and Thomson, and Bernstein's Symphony No. 2, "The Age of Anxiety." ♦ July 26-27 and July 29 at 7:30: Levine returns to operatic pursuits, conducting the Tanglewood Vocal Fellows and Orchestra in a staged production (directed by Ira Siff) of **"Don Giovanni."** ♦ July 28 at 8:30: The annual "Tanglewood on Parade," an evening of light classics (Rossini's "William Tell" Overture, Tchaikovsky's "1812," and the like) offered by all of the festival's resident orchestras, conducted by Levine, Keith Lockhart, John Williams, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, and Leonard Slatkin. Fireworks follow the concert. (Lenox, Mass. 888-266-1200.)

CARAMOOR
July 23 at 7:30 and July 24 at 8: In two separate concerts, the Caramoor Virtuosi—a loose assemblage of such established young chamber-music stars as the cellists Edward Arron and Sophie Shao—range over music by Dvořák, Mozart, Franck (the Piano Quintet), Menotti, and Mendelssohn (the Octet for Strings). ♦ July 25 at 8: In the week's big affair, the always impressive Jonathan Biss will be the soloist in a concert with the Orchestra of St. Luke's (conducted by Peter Oundjian) that features music by Grieg (the delightful "Holberg Suite"), Stravinsky, and Mozart (the Piano Concerto No. 21 in C Major). ♦ July 26 at 4:30: A Sunday-afternoon recital by the pianist Vladimir Feltsman offers music by Bach, Beethoven (the "Pathétique" Sonata), and Mussorgsky ("Pictures at an Exhibition"). (Katonah, N.Y. 914-232-1252. For full schedule, see www.caramoor.org.)

MUSIC FESTIVAL OF THE HAMPTONS
The hardy East End series (which bows out just before the Bridgehampton Chamber Music Festival begins) comes to a gracious close with a concert offered by the flutist Sato Moughalian and the harpist Bridget Kibbey, an early-evening airing of music by Bach, Bartók, Fauré, and Piazzolla ("Histoire du Tango"). (Longhouse Reserve, East Hampton, N.Y. July 24 at 5:30. For full schedule and ticket information, see www.musicfestivalofthehamptons.com.)

NORFOLK CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL
July 24 at 8: In one of those programs that tiptoe around the Germanic chamber-music colossus, an assemblage of faculty artists from the Yale Summer School of Music (including the tenor James Taylor and the bassoonist Frank Morelli) offer music from three continents by Elgar, Thomson, Ezra Laderman (the world première of "Jersey Rain," a collaboration with the poet Robert Pinsky), Saint-Saëns, Ravel ("Kaddisch"), and Piazzolla. ♦ July 25 at 8: The Leschetizky Trio performs piano trios by Haydn, Bloch, and Schubert (the Trio in B-Flat Major, Op. 99), along with a work by the contemporary Russian composer Sergei Slonimsky. (Norfolk, Conn. 860-542-3000.)

GLIMMERGLASS OPERA
July 24 at 8 and July 27 at 2: Rossini's delightful **"La Cenerentola"** is offered in a "naturalistic" production by Kevin Newbury, with Julie Boulianne, John Tessier, Eduardo Chama, and Keith Phares heading the cast; Joseph Colaneri conducts. ♦ July 25 at 8: Gian Carlo Menotti's **"The Consul,"** the most acclaimed of his many operas, is a classic Cold War melodrama, but its plot, about a desperate woman trying to protect her husband from the tentacles of a police state, could have been plucked from today's headlines. This production is by Sam Helfrich, who scored a hit at Glimmerglass with his staging of Philip Glass's "Orphée" in 2007. Melissa Citro, Michael Chioldi, Joyce Castle, and Leah Wool take the leading roles; David Angus. ♦ July 26 and July 28 at 2: The redoubtable Jonathan Miller directs **"La Traviata,"** with a cast featuring Mary Dunleavy, Ryan MacPherson, and Malcolm MacKenzie; Mikhail Agrest. (Cooperstown, N.Y. 607-547-2255.)

MARLBORO MUSIC
The iconic summer chamber-music festival, headed by the pianists Mitsuko Uchida and Richard Goode, begins another season devoted to the (mostly German) classics; concert programs are announced one week in advance at www.marlboromusic.org. (Marlboro, Vt. 802-254-2394. July 25 at 8:30 and July 26 at 2:30.)

MUSIC MOUNTAIN
The Penderecki String Quartet comes to northern Connecticut's chamber-music shrine to perform classic works by Beethoven and Brahms (the Piano Quintet, with Daniel Epstein) along with a suite by the early-twentieth-century London violist H. Waldo Warner. (Falls Village, Conn. 860-824-7126. July 26 at 3.)

MOVIES OPENING

THE ANSWER MAN
A romantic comedy about a reclusive author who is famous for his book on spirituality. Directed by John Hindman and starring Jeff Daniels, Lauren Graham, and Lou Taylor Pucci. Opening July 24. (In limited release.)

DEADGIRL
In this horror film, directed by Gadi Harel and Marcel Sarmiento, two high-school students stumble upon a corpse. Opening July 24. (Sunshine Cinema.)

THE ENGLISH SURGEON
A documentary, directed by Geoffrey Smith, about Henry Marsh, a London neurosurgeon who travels to Ukraine to treat patients in impoverished hospitals. Opening July 24. (Cinema Village.)

G-FORCE
An animated 3-D action film, about government-trained animals who become espionage experts. Directed by Hoyt Yeatman; with the voices of Nicolas Cage, Zach Galifianakis, and Sam Rockwell. Opening July 24. (In wide release.)

IN THE LOOP
Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. Opening July 24. (IFC Center.)

LOREN CASS
Chris Fuller directed this drama, about teen-agers in St. Petersburg, Florida, who confront racial conflict in the aftermath of riots. Opening July 24. (Cinema Village.)

ORPHAN
A thriller, directed by Jaume Collet-Serra, about a couple whose adopted child turns out to be supernatural trouble. Starring Peter Sarsgaard and Vera Farmiga. Opening July 24. (In wide release.)

SHRINK
In this drama, directed by Jonas Pate, a psychologist to the stars struggles to deal with his own issues. Starring Kevin Spacey, Dallas Roberts, Keke Palmer, and Jack Hudson. Opening July 24. (Chelsea Cinemas and Sunshine Cinema.)

THE UGLY TRUTH
A romantic comedy, directed by Robert Luketic, about a TV producer (Katherine Heigl) whose colleague (Gerard Butler) tries to help her find love. Opening July 24. (In wide release.)

"Loren Cass," Chris Fuller's drama about teen life, opens July 24 at Cinema Village.

R. KIKUO JOHNSON

NOW PLAYING

AWAY WE GO

Sam Mendes, working with a script by the husband-and-wife novelists Dave Eggers and Vendela Vida, has created a movie very different in tone from "American Beauty," "Road to Perdition," and "Revolutionary Road," all of which tended to imprison their American characters in restrictive visual schemes. This movie is free and easy, almost ruminative in tone, like something from the early seventies. An unmarried couple in their thirties, Burt (John Krasinski) and Verona (Maya Rudolph), who is pregnant, struggle to figure out who they are and what they want. They travel around the country in an old Volvo, visiting friends and relatives. The vignettes are both funny and touching. With Allison Janney as an alcoholic who screams at her kids and Maggie Gyllenhaal as a pushy New Age mother whose virtue saps everyone's strength.—*David Denby* (Reviewed in our issue of 6/8 & 15/09.) (In wide release.)

THE BEACHES OF AGNÈS

Starting alone on a beach, admitting the theatrical aspect of her self-presentation, the eighty-year-old director Agnès Varda sets up the serious play and heartfelt whimsy of this filmed autobiography. When, moments later, her crew strews the beach, under her exacting direction, with rickety arrays of antique mirrors, she establishes her retrospective gaze as a truth inseparable from the fictions of her imagination. Though she fulfills the rules of the genre, with a more or less chronological guided tour through the sites (in France and elsewhere) and the sights (her movies, photographs, and art projects) of her life, her main order of business is love. Her clever, freely associative set pieces spark encounters with family and long-unseen friends and guide her spoken reminiscences. The emotional core of the film is Varda's life with her late husband, the director Jacques Demy (who died in 1990), who, even now, continues to inspire her. Uninhibited about sex, generous in her affections, worldly-wise, blending solemn recollections with self-deprecating antics, Varda, seemingly freed from fear and shame by age and honors, goes far beyond a tale of life lived in art and makes a work of art in its own right, one of her best—a poignant, rapturously emotional tribute to life itself. In French.—*Richard Brody* (Lincoln Plaza and Quad Cinema.)

BIGGER THAN LIFE

In Nicholas Ray's extravagant, wide-screen, Technicolor melodrama, from 1956, the horror of middle-class decency is surpassed only by the terror of the abyss that lies beyond it. That's what Ed Avery (James Mason), a small-town English teacher and devoted family man, learns when he's stricken with a grave blood disease and treated with the "wonder drug" cortisone. When he's careless about his dosages, he suffers its main side effect: psychosis, which, in his case, takes the form of overdrive. Bursting with energy, discipline, discontent, and cruelty, Ed turns on his students, neighbors, friends, and, ultimately, his family, in one of the most fearsomely histrionic scenes ever filmed. Mason's gift for cold-eyed madness is heightened by Ray's exuberantly lurid approach. He films Ed's jaundiced world view with cocked angles and shock cuts and invokes the clash of slovenly good cheer and tyrannical order with a palette that sets decorous neutral tones against the acid colors of corrosive passion and the eerie, unearthly fluorescence of the little purple bottle at the heart of it all. Based on a 1955 article from this magazine by Berton Roueché.—*R.B.* (Film Forum; July 24-25.)

BRÜNO

A big skip backward for Sacha Baron Cohen, after the merry overkill of "Borat." This time, he plays Brüno, an Austrian fashion devotee, who, having lost a job in his native land, decides to plumb America—with brief layovers elsewhere—for fame, fortune, and Paula Abdul. The technique is little changed from the previous venture, and is starting to look weary: he makes fools out of gullible celebrities (mostly, it must be said, from the lower ranks), pausing only to make fools of regular folk. But where, we might ask, is the comic purpose when a white, British, college-educated comedian adopts a camp disguise, goes on a combustible daytime TV show, and toys with the more conservative prejudices of an audience largely composed of working-class black women? What exactly is being proved? There are laughs here, but some have the air of a knowing setup, and far too many are plucked from the crotch, as if directed toward an audience too young to see the film; where Borat's naughty innocence caught and trapped a wide variety of victims in its net, "Brüno" is basically a one-track joke. Defenders of the film, which is directed by Larry Charles, will claim that it exposes the homophobic depths of Western society; for every bigot, however, there is a kindlier soul who wants to be of assistance, and, as for the hectic depictions of gay life and lust, they lurch into perilous caricature. Where Baron Cohen takes his prodigious, unfazeable gifts next is anyone's guess.—*Anthony Lane* (In wide release.)

LA COLLECTIONNEUSE

Éric Rohmer's second feature, from 1966, announces its carnal conceit from the first scene's anatomical closeups of the waif-like, bikini-clad Haydée (Haydée Politoff). She shares a friend's villa on the Riviera with Daniel (Daniel Pommereulle), a single artist, and Adrien (Patrick Bauchau), a dilettantish art dealer who is engaged to be married, and the two men compete for her in a venomously genteel way. The natural splendors of blue water, rocky shore, bright sky, and hilly terrain provide a serene setting for the eternal struggle of man versus man, man versus woman, and man versus his own worst instincts. Adrien is the film's central consciousness and voice-over narrator, and the personal price of his impending summer fling forms the core of Rohmer's moral psychology. A Ming vase and a voracious American collector (played by the film critic Eugene Archer, under the pseudonym of Seymour Hertzberg) offer the symbolism. And, as a tête-à-tête between Daniel and the art critic Alain Jouffroy suggests, Rohmer sees the aesthetic avant-garde as the front line of the sexual revolution—for better or for worse. In French.—*R.B.* (Museum of the Moving Image; July 25-26.)

(500) DAYS OF SUMMER

He (Joseph Gordon-Levitt) is a romantic who studied architecture but is frittering away his salad days writing greeting cards. She (Zooey Deschanel) is a free-spirited cynic floating through life who happens to land in his office as an assistant and, soon, in his bed as a lover. Whether love itself will blossom is the whole story. For a movie about heartfelt connections, its characters have no depth or substance; for one about love, it has no chemistry or spontaneity; the action takes place in Los Angeles, though we see almost none of it; and a reference to "The Graduate" does the film no favors. Forcedly cute, clumsily mechanical, overdetermined, and undernourished, this ostensibly soulful romance is a plastic void. Directed by Marc Webb.—*R.B.* (In wide release.)

FOOD, INC.

Robert Kenner's documentary is an angry blast of disgust aimed at the American food industry. It seems that the use of (heavily subsidized) corn as a cheap universal feed for chickens, for cows, and even for fish, not to mention the corn products that seep into candy, soft drinks, cheese, and almost everything else, has made that particular package of starch nearly inescapable. Kenner has many outrageous things to tell us about industrial food, but the picture is perhaps most upsetting when we get a glimpse (largely from footage shot surreptitiously by workers) of the way animals are now raised. Chickens, for instance, never see daylight, but are mostly kept in long, dark, stifling sheds where they stand in their own waste, fatted with corn until they are slaughtered, in a mere forty-nine days. Cows are also jammed together in enormous pens, many of them sick from feed that violates a digestive system built for grass. Eric Schlosser, the author of "Fast Food Nation" (2001), and Michael Pollan, who wrote "The Omnivore's

TABLES FOR TWO
HARBOUR

harbour
NEW YORK

HONORE BROWN

290 Hudson St. (212-989-6410)—Moored in the southwest corner of SoHo, this new seafood restaurant is a maritime fantasy, with porthole windows, wood-lined interiors, and white leather banquettes evoking the interior of a yacht or a cruise ship. The walls are hung with nautical charts, pictures of boats, and samples of sailor's knots (should a diner suddenly need to tie, say, a sheepshank or a lighterman's hitch), and a huge glass sculpture of vaguely aquatic pods and fronds depends from the ceiling, looking like a collaboration between Dale Chihuly and David Attenborough. But the lavish décor is also a shrewd way of disguising what is really an awkward L-shaped space stuck in an unpromising location, where the vortex of the Holland Tunnel drains all life from the streets.

There's a similar mix of extravagance and canniness in the menu, which is studded with ingredients like *shisito*, yellow curry, *sudachi*, and *lop chum*, signalling a brave adherence to fusion cuisine. But eclecticism needn't mean chaos. Besides, can it be helped if fish goes well with coconut milk and lemongrass? Clam chowder was successfully reconfigured as a kind of Thai curry, but its thick texture and floating potatoes insured that the New England version wasn't entirely forgotten. Lobster with green garlic, crispy peas, and baby carrots came in a buttery curry-and-smoked-paprika emulsion, along with a single large maitake mushroom whose flavor permeated the rest of the dish. Some juxtapositions don't work, and occasionally you find yourself admiring virtuosity while feeling that a simpler approach might actually have produced something better. Crispy branzino arrived in a flour-crust exoskeleton whose even stiffness must be hard to achieve but which left the fish dry.

Near the restaurant, several swank condo and hotel developments, including the gargantuan Trump SoHo, are nearing completion, and you get the sense that if these buildings are ever filled Harbour's future will be secure. For now, a lively youngish crowd seems to be drawn by the reasonable prices. A sprinkling of older folk, some heavily tanned, seemed harder to place. Perhaps, relying on the restaurant's appearance, they were tricked into thinking it really was a cruise. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays for dinner. Entrées $21-$39).

—*Leo Carey*

Dilemma" (2006), lay out the case with devastating authority, and, after watching a number of farmers and rebels who fight the system, one comes out of the movie in a state of admiration and rage.—*D.D.* (6/29/09) (In limited release.)

HAMLET GOES BUSINESS
Turning the melancholy Dane into a kvetchy Finn, the director Aki Kaurismäki transforms Shakespeare's inward masterwork into a dour pastiche of film noir that sacrifices poetry and profundity for a memorable, distinctly cinematic mood. Infusing the hysterical precision of modernism with the anarchic bitterness of punk rock, Kaurismäki comes up with clever visual incarnations of many of the play's big moments and funny twists on some of its big lines. As the title suggests, the kingdom has become a corporation, and Hamlet's new stepfather wants to sell off its shipyards and produce rubber ducks instead (one of several goofy touches that break the mood in the interest of postmodern audience-winking). When the play becomes the thing, Hamlet's instructions to his leading player, about stillness and quiet, must have resembled Kaurismäki's own: the frozen postures and menacing, epigrammatic inflections join with granitic compositions, high-contrast lighting, and pregnant shadows to link the story's natural emotions with the self-conscious artifice of their evocation. It's just a game, but one that's fun to go along with. In Finnish. Released in 1987.—*R.B.* (Film Society of Lincoln Center; July 23-24 and July 26.)

THE HANGOVER
Three friends (Bradley Cooper, Ed Helms, and Zach Galifianakis) have to reconstruct, after an alcohol-induced group memory loss, a wild bachelor party where they lost the groom (Justin Bartha). After waking up in a trashed Las Vegas hotel suite, the three lead characters come across a host of madcap surprises on their way to solving the mystery, and their director (Todd Phillips) has a natural, unfussy style that allows the actors plenty of room to riff energetically through their parts (Cooper is especially good). The movie's episodic nature is not perfect (there's a fey Asian gambler who's the brunt of cheap gags), but what makes this bromance work is the performers' contagious camaraderie. With a sunny Heather Graham sweetening the mix.—*Bruce Diones* (In wide release.)

HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE
Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. (In wide release.)

HUMPDAY
Given that Lynn Shelton's new film hails from the stable known as mumblecore, it's pretty loud, full of whinnying debate and gleeful shouts. A young husband and wife, Ben (Mark Duplass) and Anna (Alycia Delmore), are thrown by the arrival of Andrew (Joshua Leonard), a bearded Boudu who was Ben's close friend in college, and who brings with him a gust of the bohemian excess that the married couple like to think (or maybe fear) that they have left behind. During a boozy, pansexual evening, Ben and Andrew conceive a crazy plan: they will contribute to a porno festival by having sex on camera—not just two straight guys but best buddies. Once sobered up, neither wants to back down; they are determined to butch it out, and even Anna, though aghast, gives them the go-ahead. There is a trick here, which Shelton very nearly pulls off: so artless is her approach, with its ambling conversation and hovering, on-the-spot camerawork, and so generous are her actors (Delmore being the standout) that we wind up half-believing what is, by any standard, a ridiculous conceit. As a result, the film is at its best and most convincing as the heroes lose their nerve; bolder viewers will be disappointed, but when did you last see a comedy that built so inexorably toward an anticlimax? With Shelton herself, tellingly cast as the friend who will try anything.—*A.L.* (In limited release.)

THE HURT LOCKER
Over and over, Staff Sergeant William James (Jeremy Renner) walks to a bomb site in a heavy protective suit and tries to figure out how to pull apart the clumsily tangled wires and flimsy triggering devices of an I.E.D. (improvised explosive device). The two other members of James's team, the frightened young Eldridge (Brian Geraghty) and the wary, experienced Sanborn (Anthony Mackie), jerk their guns this way and that, covering him and screaming at anyone who moves. Kathryn Bigelow's movie is set in Baghdad in 2004, and it brings us, from its particular angle, closer to the dangers of the war than any other movie about this conflict. Bigelow keeps the space tight and coherent: no matter how many times she cuts away, you know exactly where James is in relation to the bomb—whether he's in the kill zone or far enough away to be safe (you can't break up the integrity of space when space is the subject of your movie). The movie is almost unbearably tense—it's a considerable achievement. With Guy Pearce and Ralph Fiennes in small roles. Written by Mark Boal.—*D.D.* (6/29/09) (In limited release.)

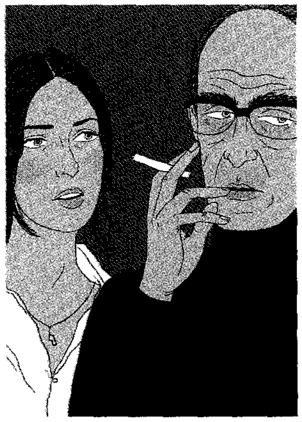
KAGEMUSHA
Warfare is treated dispassionately in this epic film in color by Akira Kurosawa, which is set during the wars of the clans in seventeenth-century Japan (the period just before the country was unified). Kurosawa seems to be saying that wisdom dictates caution, security, stasis, but that to be alive is to be subject to impulse, to chaos. The film's style is ceremonial rather than dramatic; it's not battle that Kurosawa is interested in here but formations in battle regalia. He appears to see war as a part of the turmoil of life, and he asks us simply to observe what he shows us. Perhaps he thinks that this way the horror will reach us at a deeper level. But he's also in love with the aesthetics of warfare—he's a schoolboy setting up armies of perfect soldiers and smiling at the patterns he has devised. These two sets of feelings may have neutralized "Kagemusha"—put it at a remove and made it somewhat abstract. The film seems fixated on mountains, triangles, and trees. Tatsuya Nakadai plays the warlord known as the Mountain, and he also plays the thieving peasant who has been condemned to death but whose life is spared so that he can serve as the lord's double. Written by Kurosawa and Masato Ide. In Japanese. Released in 1980.—*Pauline Kael* (BAM; July 22-23.)

MOON
The first full-length from the British director Duncan Jones stars Sam Rockwell and Sam Rockwell, with a cameo by Sam Rockwell; such is the occupational hazard, perhaps, of any film set in a future where cloning is common practice. Rockwell is among the most lively and affable of current stars: a good thing, too, given the amount of time he spends onscreen, and the loneliness with which he has to contend. He plays Sam, an astronaut who is nearing the end of a three-year stint on the lunar surface, where he manages the mining of helium-3, a precious substance that will save the planet Earth. On a routine inspection, he crashes his vehicle, and wakes up in the infirmary; from that point on, the film traces the fragmentation of his sanity, his being, and, worst of all, his employment prospects. He is stuck with himself, and so are we. The over-all design is a clear homage to "2001: A Space Odyssey," not just in the soothing tones of the onboard computer—voiced here, with a sliver of menace, by Kevin Spacey—but also in a willingness to disengage from the mechanism of plot and turn instead, as Kubrick did, to the vaporous metaphysics of the otherworldly. Jones, like his hero, has mastered a complex task—but the story he has to tell is lost in space.—*A.L.* (In wide release.)

ON DANGEROUS GROUND
The first half of this 1952 film contains sensational urban-cop stuff, and Robert Ryan is great—eruptively expressive—as a police detective pushed to brutality, and almost to breakdown, by the hostility of crooks and citizens alike. Nicholas Ray shoots and cuts with an offhand incisiveness, as if his camera were keyed to his cop's febrile brain. But when Ryan's boss (Ed Begley) dispatches him to crack a killing in the boondocks in order to cool him off, the movie dissolves into a melodramatic parable. Having experienced a debasing loneliness, Ryan goes through purification; Ida Lupino, as the blind sister of a mentally disturbed young murderer, is his angel of redemption. The script is by A. I. Bez-

CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK
THE QUIET MAN

On July 27, Toni Servillo will make an appearance at the Film Society of Lincoln Center. Admirers of the great Neapolitan actor and stage director will be waiting to see if he exudes in person the same grave, amused reserve that he does onscreen.



DIVYA SRINIVASAN

Those recently bewitched by his performance in "Il Divo" should return for "The Consequences of Love" (2004), screening July 28-29, in which Servillo, working with the same director, Paolo Sorrentino, gives another lesson in mesmerism. He plays a near-speechless businessman who, for eight years, has been staying at a hotel in Lugano, consoled by cigarettes, chess problems, and a weekly shot of heroin. That mournful rhythm is broken when, for the first time, he attends to the beauty of the barmaid (Olivia Magnani). Every man, as he confides to the manager, has "an unmentionable secret," and, with a suavity matched by the tracking shots, his own mystery begins to unfurl. This could have been a mere exercise in style, yet, thanks to Servillo, we realize, as the story reaches an unforgettable close, that style in itself cannot save a lonely life.

—*Anthony Lane*

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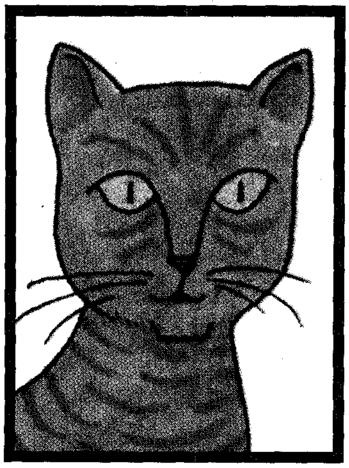

newyorker.com/go/
catsanddogs

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY

zerides and Ray, from the novel "Mad with Much Heart," by Gerald Butler.—*Michael Sragow* (Film Forum; July 28.)

THE PROPOSAL
In this wannabe screwball comedy written by Peter Chiarelli and directed by Anne Fletcher, a tyrannical book publisher (Sandra Bullock) and her harried assistant (Ryan Reynolds) are forced into marriage to prevent her deportation to Canada. A host of overly familiar contrivances are introduced to get these polar opposites together for a typical Hollywood ending, but, along the way, Bullock and Reynolds attack their roles with real gusto (they have great chemistry), and a strong supporting cast (including Betty White, Craig T. Nelson, and Mary Steenburgen) keeps the action moving briskly. The film shamelessly meets audience expectations with good-natured charm; it's romantic comedy as comfort food.—*B.D.* (In wide release.)

PUBLIC ENEMIES
Michael Mann's ravishing dream of violent gangster life in the thirties. The scowling men in long dark coats and hats, led by the severely elegant John Dillinger (Johnny Depp), march into some grand Midwestern bank, take over the place, throw the cash in bags, and make their getaway, jumping onto the running boards of flat-topped black Fords. The blazing tommy guns emit little spearheads of flame, just as in a comic book. Despite all the violence, the movie is aesthetically shaped and slightly distanced by the pictorial verve of gangland effrontery—the public aggression that Mann makes inseparable from high style. Mann and Depp have made Dillinger a gentleman thug, loyal to his friends and to his hatcheck girlfriend, Billie Frechette, played by Marion Cotillard with a combination of desperate hope and fear that is enormously appealing. The movie chronicles not only Dillinger's wild final months but the parallel rise of organized crime and the F.B.I. With his cheekbones built up and his handsome features on the verge of disappearing into jowls, Billy Crudup plays the young but already insufferable J. Edgar Hoover as a bullying, righteous, and wary man, a natural-born populist authoritarian. One of Mann's wittiest accomplishments is to recapture the stiffly formal side of official life in the thirties—the sound of a newly powerful country trying to impress itself with its own importance. With the dour Christian Bale as Melvin Purvis, who commanded the pursuit of Dillinger.—*D.D.* (7/6 & 13/09) (In wide release.)

TRANSFORMERS: REVENGE OF THE FALLEN
Two sets of leaden-voiced plastic-and-metal monsters, the Autobots and the Decepticons, having failed to settle their differences over a parking space on an alien planet, fight it out on Earth—with human beings, in the dubious form of the young couple Shia LaBeouf and Megan Fox, in the middle. Apart from the frustrating truth that it's impossible, much of the time, to tell the warring creatures apart—both kinds are huge, black, gleaming, and clanking, with many arms and appendages—they obey no rules that would make their combats a struggle of courage against limitation and therefore worth caring about. Achilles and Hector had spears and shields. These things can fly, climb, bash things, bore holes, change shape back into cars or trucks, dance the cancan in the pre-First World War Folies-Bergère. There isn't much they can't do, and their endless struggles are redundant and undifferentiated. Directed by the stunningly, almost viciously untalented Michael Bay.—*D.D.* (7/6 & 13/09) (In wide release.)

THE VANISHED EMPIRE
Back in the U.S.S.R., they didn't know how lucky they were—so, at least, says Karen Shakhnazarov, in this sentimental drama about growing up in Moscow in the early nineteen-seventies, in the age of Brezhnev. His eighteen-year-old protagonist, Sergey, charmingly deluded by the selfishness and vanity fed to him by the bluejeans, rock and roll, consumer goods, and even (gasp!) marijuana filtering in illicitly from the decadent West, screws up his love life, his studies, and his family relations, under the benign gaze of authorities who care little that he bills himself "a democrat and a dissident" and thumbs his nose openly at dogma. Happily, the director embeds his message-mongering in a vision of adolescence that seems to be not far from his own. First love, family ties, an impulse for adventure, and the universally anarchic teen spirit survive even the director's ham-fisted claims to Russian dominion over now independent states. In Russian.—*R.B.* (Quad Cinema.)

Also Playing

I LOVE YOU, BETH COOPER: In wide release. **ICE AGE: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS:** In wide release. **A WOMAN IN BERLIN:** Angelika Film Center. **YOO HOO, MRS. GOLDBERG:** In limited release.

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.

ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES
32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (212-505-5181)—The films of Robert Kramer. July 22 at 7: "Route One/USA" (1989). ♦ July 23 at 6:30: "In the Country" (1966). ♦ July 23 at 8: "Milestones" (1975, Kramer and John Douglas). ♦ Special screenings. July 24 and July 27-28 at 7 and 9 and July 25-26 at 3:30, 5:15, 7, and 9: "California Company Town" (2008, Lee Anne Schmitt). ♦ The films of Ulrich Seidl. All films are in German. July 24 and July 28 at 6:45 and July 26 at 8:30: "Dog Days" (2001). ♦ July 24 at 9:15 and July 26 at 3:45: "Models" (1999). ♦ July 25 at 4:15 and July 28 at 9:15: "Losses Are to Be Expected" (1992). ♦ July 25 at 6:45 and July 27 at 9:15: "Animal Love" (1995). ♦ July 25 at 9:15 and July 27 at 7:15: "Jesus, You Know" (2003). ♦ July 26 at 6:15: "Pictures at an Exhibition" (1996) and "The Bosom Friend" (1997).

BAM ROSE CINEMAS
30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-636-4100)—In revival. July 22-23 at 7: "Kagemusha" (†). ♦ Special screenings. July 24 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:15: Best of the Ottawa Animation Festival. ♦ July 25 at 2 and 6:50: "Animation Block Party 1." ♦ July 25 at 4:30 and 9:15: "Animation Block Party 2." ♦ July 26 at 2 and 6:50: "Animation Block Party 3." ♦ July 26 at 4:30 and 9:15: "Animation Block Party 4." ♦ "The Muppet Movie 20th Anniversary." July 28 at 6:50: "Muppets History 201," presented by Craig Shemin, vice-president of the Jim Henson Legacy.

FILM FORUM
W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (212-727-8110)—Through Aug. 6: The films of Nicholas Ray. July 22-23 at 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, and 9:50: "In a Lonely Place" (1950). ♦ July 24-25 at 1:30, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, and 9:50: "Bigger Than Life" (†). ♦ July 26 at 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, and 9:50 and July 27 at 1:10, 3:20, and 10: "Johnny Guitar" (1954). ♦ July 27 at 6 and 7:50: "Born to Be Bad" (1950). ♦ July 28 at 2:40, 6, and 9:20: "On Dangerous Ground" (†). ♦ July 28 at 1, 4:20, and 7:40: "A Woman's Secret" (1949).

FILM SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER
Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center (212-875-5610)—Shakespeare on film. July 22 at 1:30 and 6:15 and July 25 at 3:45: "Romeo + Juliet" (1996, Baz Luhrmann). ♦ July 22 at 3:50 and July 25 at 1:30: "Looking for Richard" (1996, Al Pacino). ♦ July 22 at 8:40 and July 26 at 8: "Macbeth" (1971, Roman Polanski). ♦ July 23 at 2:30, July 24 at 6:15, and July 25 at 9: "The Tempest" (1979, Derek Jarman). ♦ July 23 at 4:30: "The Angelic Conversation" (1985, Jarman). ♦ July 23 and July 26 at 6:15 and July 24 at 2:30: "Hamlet Goes Business" (†). ♦ July 23 at 8: "Titus" (1999, Julie Taymor). ♦ July 24 at 4:15 and July 26 at 3:45: "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (1935, William Dieterle and Max Reinhardt). ♦ July 24 at 8:15 and July 26 at 1: "Maqbool" (2003, Vishal Bhardwaj; in Hindi/Urdu). ♦ July 25 at 6:30: "Hamlet" (2000, Michael Almereyda). ♦ "Fire and Ice," the films of Toni Servillo. All films are in Italian. July 27 at 6 and July 28 at 9: "Il Divo" (2008, Paolo Sorrentino). The July 27 screening will be introduced by Servillo. ♦ July 27 at 9: "The Girl by the Lake" (2007, Andrea Molaioli). ♦ July 28 at 4 and July 29 at 6:10: "The Consequences of Love" (2004, Paolo Sorrentino). ♦ July 28 at 6:15: "Gomorrah" (2008, Matteo Garrone).

FRENCH INSTITUTE ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE
Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (212-355-6160)—The films of Michel Piccoli. July 21 at 12:30, 4, and 7:30: "The Woman in Blue" (1973, Michel Deville; in French).

IFC CENTER
323 Sixth Ave., at W. 3rd St. (212-924-7771)—"Waverly Midnights." July 24-25 at midnight: "Blood Simple" (1984, Joel and Ethan Coen). ♦ In revival. July 24-26 at 11 A.M.: "Sonatine" (1993, Takeshi Kitano; in Japanese).

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9480)—"Première Brazil 2009." All films are in Portuguese. July 22 and July 27 at 4:30: "Babilônia 2000" (2000, Eduardo Coutinho). ♦ July 22 at 8: "Should Nothing Else Work Out" (2008, José Eduardo Belmonte). ♦ July 23 at 4:30: "Vultures Have Wings" (2008, André Rangel and Marcos Negrão) and "The Discovery of Brazil" (1937, Humberto Mauro). ♦ July 23 at 8: "Master, a Building in Copacabana" (2002, Coutinho). ♦ July 24 at 4:30: "Metalworkers" (2004, Coutinho). ♦ July 24 at 8: "Last Stop 174" (2008, Bruno Barreto). ♦ July 25 at 2: "Playing" (2006, Coutinho). ♦ July 25 at 5: "The End and the Beginning" (2005, Coutinho). ♦ July 25 at 8: "Cinderellas, Wolves, and a Prince Charming" (2008, Joel Zito Araújo). ♦ July 26 at 2:30: "Moscow" (2009, Coutinho). ♦ July 26 at 5:30: "Beyond Ipanema: Brazilian Waves in Global Music" (2009, Guto Barra). ♦ July 27 at 8: "69-Luz Square" (2008, Carolina Markowicz and Joana Galvão) and "Youth" (2008, Domingos Oliveira).

MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE
35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—Through Aug. 30: "French New Wave Essentials." All screenings will be held at the Museum of Arts and Design, 2 Columbus Circle (212-299-7777). July 25-26 at 2: "La Collectionneuse" (†). ♦ July 25-26 at 4: "My Night at Maud's" (1969, Éric Rohmer; in French).

RUBIN MUSEUM OF ART
150 W. 17th St. (212-620-5000, ext. 344)—"Cabaret Cinema." July 24 at 9:30: "The Garden of Earthly Delights" (2004, Lech Majewski).

READINGS AND TALKS

"PARK-LIT"
The roving summertime series, which presents readings in public spaces, brings Pam Dick, Alan Gilbert, Raphael Rubinstein, Matthew Sharpe, and Frederic Tuten to Tompkins Square Park. They will be sharing their contributions to the latest issue of *First Proof,* the literary supplement to *Bomb* magazine. (Avenue A at 7th St., near the band shell. For more information, call 718-636-9100, ext. 104. July 22 at 6:30.)

BARNES & NOBLE
Elizabeth Hawes reads from "Camus: A Romance," her appreciation of the French writer. (Broadway at 82nd St. No tickets necessary. July 22 at 7.)

CENTRAL PARK
The writer and naturalist Marie Winn celebrates the paperback release of her book "Central Park in the Dark" with a talk and nocturnal guided tours of Manhattan's backyard. (The Central Park Arsenal, Fifth Ave. at 64th St. For more information, visit www.nycaudubon.org, or call 212-691-7483. July 24 at 7.)

MCNALLY JACKSON BOOKS
Benjamin Nugent, the author of "American Nerd: The Story of My People," discusses his work with Brant Rumble, his editor at Scribner. (52 Prince St. No tickets necessary. July 27 at 7.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

"LOWBROW READER VARIETY HOUR"
The Lowbrow Reader, a little journal of comedy and literature, celebrates the publication of its latest issue. The Brooklyn brother-sister indie-rock band the Fiery Furnaces, the singer-songwriter Larkin Grimm, and Peter Stampfel, of the Holy Modal Rounders and the Fugs (appearing here with his new band, the Ether Frolic Mob), will perform short acoustic sets. Also on the bill is a performance by the comedian John Mulaney and a reading by the veteran journalist and writer Gilbert Rogin, who published thirty-three stories in this magazine between 1963 and 1978. His first published story in twenty-nine years is in the journal's latest issue. (Housing Works Bookstore Café, 126 Crosby St. 212-334-3324. July 22 at 7.)

THE MUSEUM OF SEX
The museum stays open late to benefit Planned Parenthood of New York City. Music will be provided by the d.j. Donna D'Cruz, and there'll be an open bar, a silent auction, and access to the museum's exhibitions, including "The Sex Lives of Animals" and "The Sex Lives of Robots." (Fifth Ave. at 27th St. For more information, visit www.ppnyc.org. July 23 at 8.)

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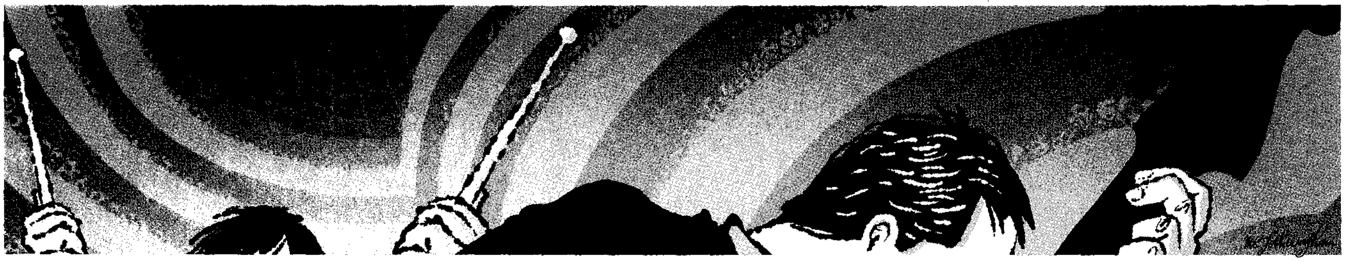
Visit the Goings On blog, at www.newyorker.com/go/goingson, for additional cultural coverage and commentary.



"It Came from Brooklyn," at the Guggenheim.

EDWIN FOTHERINGHAM

ON THE HORIZON

MOVIES
WE HARDLY KNEW YE
July 29-Aug. 2

In the midst of the dog days of summer, BAM finds a good reason to revive "Dog Day Afternoon": a tribute to the actor John Cazale, one of its stars and one of the great screen presences of the nineteen-seventies (he died in 1978, of bone cancer, at age forty-two). Other offerings include the first two "Godfather" movies, "The Conversation," "The Deer Hunter," and a new documentary about Cazale, directed by Richard Shepard. (718-636-4100.)

THE THEATRE
DIONYSIAN DELIGHT
Aug. 11

Jonathan Groff originated the role of Melchior in "Spring Awakening" on Broadway. Now he stars in Shakespeare in the Park's second production of the season, Euripides' "The Bacchae," directed by JoAnne Akalaitis, with music by Philip Glass. (212-539-8750.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC
ARBOR DAYS
Aug. 13-14 and Aug. 16

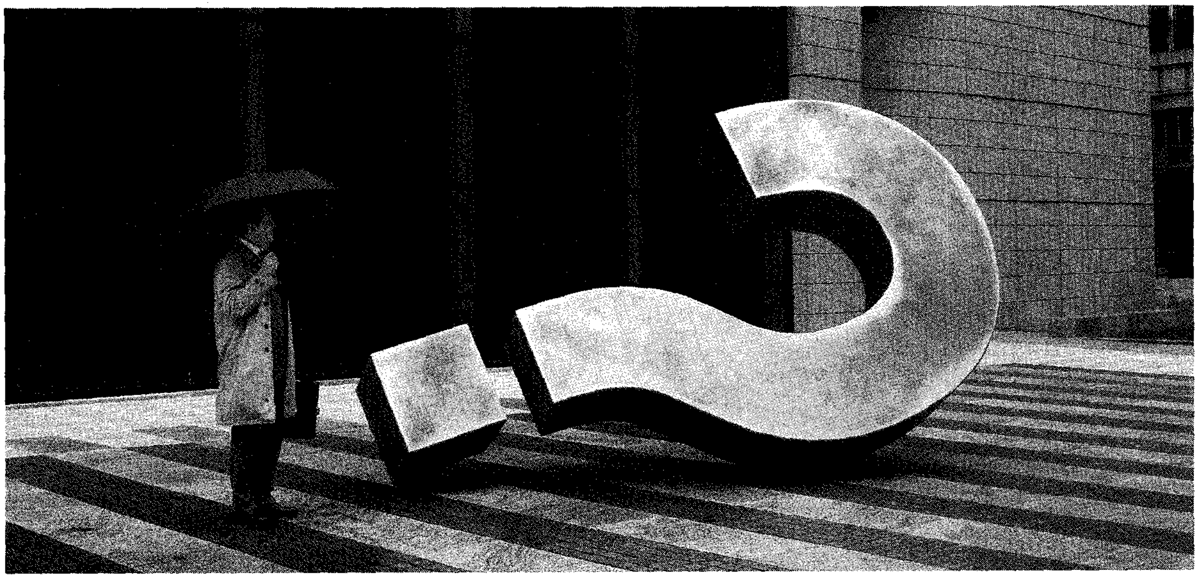
John Adams and Peter Sellars mix East and West once more in "A Flowering Tree," a radiantly tonal opera inspired by a South Indian folktale and "The Magic Flute." Adams conducts his piece, which features the Orchestra of St. Luke's and the Schola Cantorum de Venezuela, at the Mostly Mozart Festival. (212-721-6500.)

NIGHT LIFE
KING MAKERS
Aug. 14

The Guggenheim Museum kicks off its new monthly series of music and literature, "It Came from Brooklyn," which will include performances and appearances by the Walkmen, High Places, Colson Whitehead, and others. (www.guggenheim.org.)

ART
FLOWER POWER
Sept. 13-April 12

If you thought the lines were long at MOMA for "Van Gogh and the Colors of the Night," get ready for "Monet's Water Lilies." For the first time since opening its new building, in 2004, the museum will exhibit its entire cache of the Impressionist master's late paintings of his garden at Giverny. (212-708-9400.)



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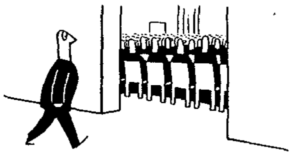
THE
NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

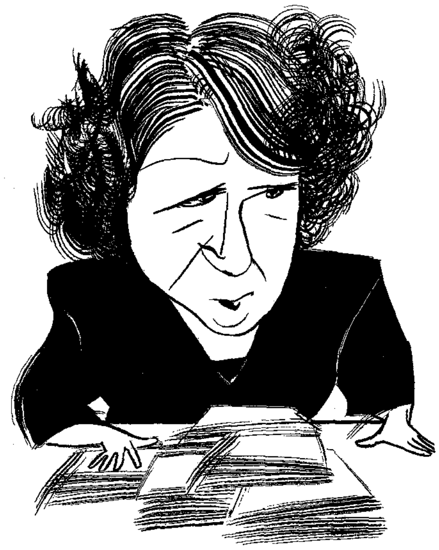
COMMENT
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS



In her opening statement before the Senate Judiciary Committee last week, Sonia Sotomayor said that she wanted to clear up some questions about her views. "In the past month, many senators have asked me about my judicial philosophy," she said. "Simple: fidelity to the law. The task of a judge is not to make law—it is to apply the law." Coming from a jurist of such distinction, this was a disappointing answer. Like much of her testimony, it suggested that the job of a Supreme Court Justice is merely to identify the correct precedents, apply them rigorously, and thus render appropriate decisions.

In fact, Justices have a great deal of discretion—in which cases they take, in the results they reach, in the opinions they write. When it comes to interpreting the Constitution—in deciding, say, whether a university admissions office may consider an applicant's race—there is, frankly, no such thing as "law." In such instances, Justices make choices, based largely, though not exclusively, on their political views of the issues involved. In reaching decisions this way, the Justices are not doing anything wrong; there is no other way to interpret the majestic vagueness of the Constitution. But the fact that Judge Sotomayor managed to avoid discussing any of this throughout four days of testimony is indicative of the way the confirmation process, as it is now designed, misleads the public about what it is that Justices do.

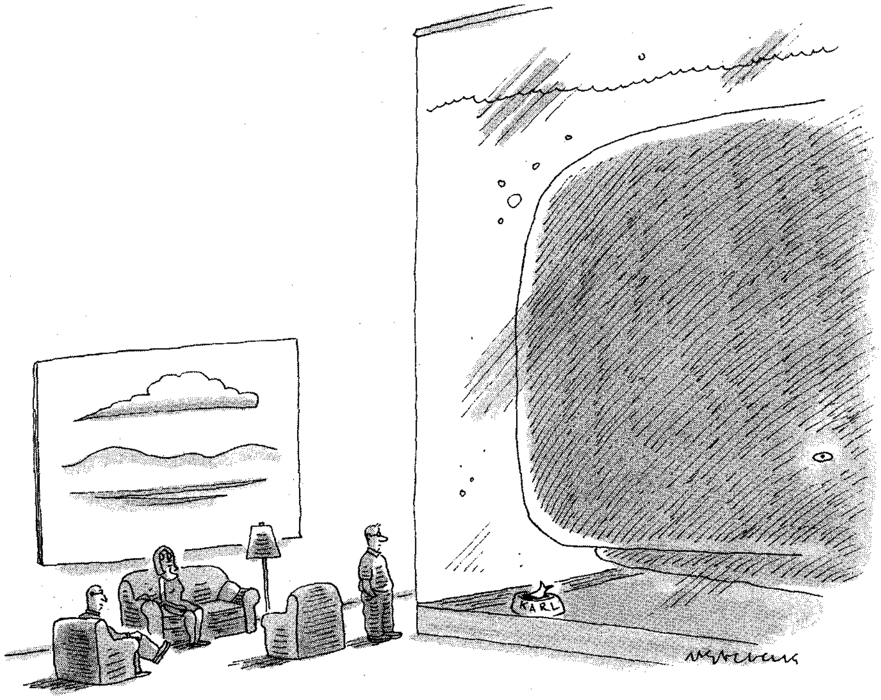
The process evolved this way as a response to a political, not a legal, problem. In 1987, Robert Bork engaged the Judiciary Committee in a substantive discussion of his judicial philosophy, and the Senate, quite properly, voted him down, because of his narrow conception of the protections enshrined in the Bill of Rights. From this example, Supreme Court nominees took the lesson that the less said the better, and beginning with Anthony Kennedy, who succeeded Bork, nominees have taken to suggesting that simple fidelity to the law was the primary work of a Justice. The stonewalling has been bipartisan, from Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who testified that "a judge sworn to decide impartially can offer no forecasts, no hints," to Samuel Alito, who ducked questions about abortion rights by saying, "It is an issue that is involved in litigation now at all levels." Accordingly, Sotomayor asserted that she will follow Supreme Court precedent and keep an "open mind." (Though, when it comes to interpreting the Constitution, one can scarcely imagine a worse qualification than an open mind. The issues are difficult and profound and require a lifetime of study to master, and one would hope that Justices arrive with heads full of firm ideas about the document they are charged with understanding.)



Still, watching a Supreme Court confirmation hearing is not a completely unedifying experience. The tableau of the first Hispanic nominee to the Court—a veteran judge of impeccable professional and academic credentials—addressing the Judiciary Committee was a satisfying one for those who care about a diverse and inclusive society. The best barometer of the current moment in law and politics, however, came not from the Judge's answers but from the senators' questions—the ones they chose not to ask as well as the ones they did.

In 2004, Karl Rove figured that a good way to secure the reëlection of George W. Bush was to place the polarizing issue of same-sex marriage on the ballots in certain swing states. Five years later, though, the prospect of gay marriage looks a lot less scary, at least to people outside "the base." (California's rejection of same-sex marriage by only a narrow margin of voters last year seemed to mark an unexpected

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL



"We found the poor thing stranded on the beach last summer and decided to adopt it."

• •

turning point on the issue.) It is true that Sotomayor's judicial record had few veins to mine in this regard, but the Republicans' reluctance to raise the issue (except briefly, late in the hearing) suggests that it's starting to become an embarrassment. There was a similar lack of passion in the few questions asked about abortion, which has been the perennial battleground of the confirmation wars.

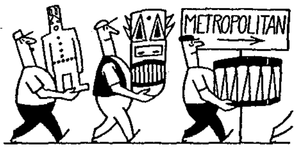
The questions that were asked, especially those asked many times, sent a message, too. Much of the hearing was spent parsing Sotomayor's comment in a 2001 speech in California, which she repeated in substance elsewhere: "I would hope that a wise Latina woman, with the richness of her experiences, would more often than not reach a better conclusion than a white male who hasn't lived that life." Likewise, she spent a lot of time defending her ruling in the New Haven firefighter case, in which she approved the city's nullification of a promotion examination when it turned out that no African-Americans had made the grade. Seventeen white firefighters and one Hispanic firefighter who qualified for promotion had challenged the city's decision in court, and the Supreme Court last month overturned Sotomayor's decision by a vote of five to four.

There was something distasteful about Sotomayor's being lectured on civil rights by the likes of Senator Jeff Sessions, of Alabama, whose own retrograde views on race back in 1986 led to his being rejected for a federal judgeship by the very committee on which he now serves. (One of the more cringe-worthy moments of the hearing was Sessions's expression of incredulity that Sotomayor might disagree with another judge on her court even though he was also Puerto Rican.) But it's worth noting that, on both issues, Sotomayor offered only a tepid defense. She disowned the "wise Latina" remark and settled on a purely legalistic justification of her ruling in the New Haven case: that the action was permissible because the city feared a lawsuit charging that the exam had a "disparate impact" on certain minorities.

In a curious way, the election of Barack Obama has hurt the traditional civil-rights agenda, which, since the nineteen-sixties, has included special measures to assist minorities in education and employment. Fairly or not, the politician who needed no help to vanquish Hillary Clinton and John McCain now stands for the idea that all playing fields in the United States are level. In any event, as the Sotomayor hearing illustrated, it's getting harder to argue otherwise. This is, in many ways, good news, because it means that some barriers to opportunity have fallen. (Though others have not; for example, only fifteen per cent of the supervisors in the New Haven Fire Department are African-American, in a city that is nearly forty per cent black.) If, over the course of a long and well-deserved career on the Supreme Court, Sonia Sotomayor figures out how to overcome those which remain, she will prove to be a very wise Latina indeed.

—*Jeffrey Toobin*

DEPT. OF HOOPLA
BURIED TREASURE



The other night, as U.S. Marines were preparing to launch their "Strike of the Sword" offensive against the Taliban in southern Afghanistan, a group of New Yorkers got together at the Metropolitan Museum for a benefit to raise money for the Rebuilding Afghanistan Foundation, and to view a collection of ancient Afghan gold and jewels called the Bactrian Hoard. There are many remarkable things about these jewels, but most impressive is the story of how they survived after they were discovered by a Russian archeologist named Viktor Sarianidi, in 1978. Sarianidi was poking around in northern Afghanistan, looking for artifacts from the Bronze Age, when he stumbled onto six graves—five women and one man, probably a king—from 100 A.D., when the area was inhabited by horseback-riding nomads called Bactrians. Not much is known about the Bactrians, but Herodotus described the burial practices of an earlier generation of nomads in the region:

> Here the corpse is placed on a couch, round which, at different distances, daggers are fixed. . . . In some other part of this trench they bury one of the deceased's concubines, whom they previously strangle, together with the baker, the cook, the groom, his most confidential servant, his horses, the choicest of his effects, and, finally, some golden goblets.

There were more than twenty thousand objects in the graves—bangles, pendants, dagger sheaths. Sarianidi took his findings to the National Museum in Kabul, but the next year the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan interrupted his work. It was the beginning of a bad time for Afghan archeology: in 1993, at the height of the Afghan civil war, the National Museum was used as a military base and was hit by a rocket; when the Taliban came to power, they destroyed thousands of artifacts, including a set of the monumental Bamiyan Buddhas. Everyone assumed that the Bactrian Hoard was lost forever. But it turned out that in 1988 some National Museum workers had secured the hoard in a vault beneath the Presidential palace. For fifteen years, these workers, who came to be called "the Keyholders," kept the hiding place secret. In 2004, after the U.S. invasion, the vault was opened. The jewels were intact. They have been circling the globe ever since, on a never-ending museum tour. (Next stop: Ottawa.)

Elisabetta Valtz-Fino, the exhibit's curator, led a tour of the treasures, which included tiger, dolphin, and ram designs (the nomads loved animals). There was a jeweller in the crowd—Tim McClelland, of McTeigue & McClelland jewellers, which helped sponsor the event—and he studied the back of a collapsible gold crown. "This is the Hubble space telescope of jewelry," he said. Adrianne Dicker-Kadzinski, a former Morgan Stanley investment banker, said she had done a stint in Afghanistan, in 2004, with the U.S. Army Reserve. "Kabul itself was very sad," she said. "The whole country is like a moonscape—brown, brown, brown."

Afterward, there was a lamb dinner at La Grenouille ("I feel very Afghan eating this," the writer Ann Marlowe said) and a raffle: all the guests received little keys; one of them opened a treasure chest containing a special gold-and-lapis bracelet made by McClelland. (The winner was a J. P. Morgan asset manager named Sophie Bosch de Hood.)

As excited as people were to have seen the Bactrian jewels, a sadness wafted over the evening: because of security concerns, the hoard can't be displayed in Afghanistan. "I'm so mad at Dick Cheney," said Caroline Firestone, an eighty-year-old philanthropist, who has known the former Vice-President for a long time. "I once gave him my house in Wyoming so he could stay there at Christmas. And he never let me come and talk to him about Afghanistan." She said she wished Afghanistan hadn't been "so thoroughly abandoned when we decided to go into Iraq."

Husain Haqqani, the Pakistani Ambassador to the U.S., made remarks at the dinner, and he was followed by Brent Scowcroft. Haqqani brought up a scene in the movie "Charlie Wilson's War" where a congressman says, about a school in Afghanistan, "Nobody gives a shit"; and he mentioned the fact that the U.S. supported the mujahideen after the Soviet invasion.

Scowcroft said this was unfair. "We did try to help Afghanistan," he said. "It was too difficult for us. We were naïve. The Taliban at least promised honest government. Anyway, we lost that.

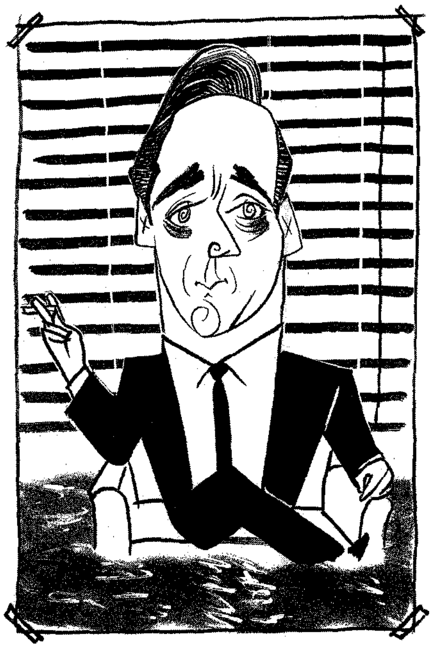
"It will be a long and difficult struggle," he continued, standing in front of the treasure chest. "And I hope the patience of this country is up for it. We've made some mistakes. We've been shortsighted. But I really think we're starting to get it right."

—Lizzie Widdicombe

DEPT. OF SELLING POSTER GIRLS

"Advertising is based on one thing: happiness" is the credo of Don Draper, the advertising guru from the AMC show "Mad Men." Linda Schupack tends to agree. "I want the advertising that we do to entertain people," Schupack, the head of marketing at AMC, said the other day in her office, near Herald Square. Schupack's job, or part of it, is to advertise a show about advertising. With the third season just weeks away, she and her staff were putting the finishing touches on a local blitz they call "New York's Gone Mad." Good luck not noticing it.

Central to the marketing of each season, Schupack explained, is a key image. The first year, she said, "we knew the show was enigmatic. We had a cast of unknowns, basically. How do we represent what the show is about?" The answer was to sell the enigma: Schupack pointed to a poster above her desk, showing Draper in silhouette, holding a cigarette. Next to it was the season-two poster, a noirish shot of Jon Hamm, who plays Draper, in Grand Central Terminal. "We came up with Grand Central because it works on multiple levels," she said. "It is, of course, so iconic to New York, but it's also a place of transition." Grand Central itself became the nexus of the campaign: AMC shrink-wrapped the shuttle train, inside and out, with advertising, while street teams in period costumes handed out business cards from Sterling Cooper, the show's fictitious ad agency.



The theme of season three is change. "We wanted our key art to be more high-concept," Schupack explained, unveiling the new poster, which hits this week: Draper is sitting in his office, looking nonchalant, as water rises up to his knees. The image was devised by the Refinery, a Burbank ad agency that beat out three other firms. Schupack flipped through a binder of rejected ideas: Draper at an office party ("too kitschy"), Draper trapped on an ice floe ("too obvious"), Draper getting sucked into a vortex ("too end-of-the-world"). Once the final concept had been chosen, a replica of Draper's office was built on the Paramount lot and filled with water, and Hamm posed in it for two hours. Earlier in the week, Schupack had taken a copy of the poster out to the sidewalk, to see how it would look in bright sunlight, and a security guard had weighed in: "He goes, 'That's how I feel sometimes! I'm just sitting in my office, totally unaffected, and the waters are rising around me.'" Season three also has a catchphrase: "The World's Gone Mad." (The first two seasons it was "Where the Truth Lies.") It has a triple meaning, Schupack explained: mad change in the early sixties, mad change in the world today, and "the pop-cultural phenomenon—the world's gone mad for 'Mad Men.'"

Schupack, who has an Entertainment Marketer of the Year award from *Ad Age* on her windowsill, said that, as someone in the business, she'd been particularly impressed by Draper's campaign for Lucky Strike tobacco ("It's toasted"). "Sometimes I think, What would we have done with that assignment?" she said. "But usually I think about it through the eyes of Peggy, the young copywriter. I thought her solution for Belle Jolie lipstick—'Mark your man'—was brilliant."

Schupack headed into a conference room, where her staff had assembled to review the marketing rollout. It was like a scene from "Mad Men," with a few exceptions: flat-screen TV, Asian-fusion takeout, and the fact that the marketers were all women. They dimmed the lights and watched a thirty-second TV spot (lots of bedroom shots). "Very steamy," Schupack said.

Alison Hoffman, the marketing director, described a Web-site promotion that will allow users to create their own "Mad Men" avatars, choosing among different ties, pipes, crinolines, and pearls. "We're still adding accessories," she said.

"We need more purses!" someone suggested.

Next, Theresa Beyer, the vice-president of activation (another thing that didn't exist in the sixties), outlined a tie-in with Banana Republic, including a contest for a walk-on role. "Banana Republic has really taken this promotion to the *n*th degree," she said. Then she announced an activation coup: the Mets had just agreed to designate a "Mad Men" seating section at one of their games.

"Get out of here!" Theano Apostolou, the head of publicity, said.

"The exciting thing is everyone in our section is going to have a fedora," Beyer went on. "Of course, the band around it will have to be Mets colors." The marketers cooed: happiness.

—*Michael Schulman*

JUVENILIA
MAMA'S BOYS

Brenda Greene, an English professor who is the executive director of the Center for Black Literature at Medgar Evers College, in Brooklyn, and the mother of the hip-hop artist Talib Kweli, was standing in the gymnasium of a Bronx high school the other day, recounting the young Kweli's dramatic efforts. She was there to participate in a panel called "Saving Our Sons," on bringing up sons as a single parent. She explained that when Kweli was growing up, in Brooklyn, he would write plays for his cousins to perform at family gatherings. (Greene's younger son, Jamal, is now an associate professor at Columbia Law School.) "He'd make everyone practice, and then, after dinner, we would sit down and watch," she said. Greene recalled one bit that was based on "Star Wars." "His plays were often about saving people," she said. "In that one, his cousin was the equivalent of Princess Leia."

After Kweli's freshman year at Brooklyn Technical High School, Greene and her husband, who later separated, decided to send Kweli to boarding school at Cheshire Academy, in Connecticut. "At Cheshire, he joined the drama club," she said. "After the movie 'Dead Poets Society' came out, they formed their own Dead Poets Society."

A few minutes later, Greene took the stage with Sheron (Umi) Smith, the mother of the actor and hip-hop artist Mos Def, Kweli's frequent collaborator; Cassandra Mack, the author of "The Single Mom's Little Book of Wisdom" and "The Black Man's Little Book of Encouragement"; and a moderator, the comedian Meshelle, who calls herself "the Indie Mom of Comedy." Meshelle wore an open-backed orange shirt, black pants, and heels. She introduced herself by saying, "Don't hate me because I've had three kids and I'm a size six." (Dr. Mahalia Hines, the mother of the hip-hop artist Common, was scheduled to attend, but she had to stay in Chicago for babysitting duty.)

Smith gave birth to Mos Def, whose real name is Dante Terrell Smith-Bey, when she was sixteen, and raised him in the Marcy Houses and the Roosevelt Houses, in Bedford-Stuyvesant. In "Grown Man Business (Fresh Vintage Bottles)," a song from 2004, Mos Def raps, "I'mma show you where the pain and the poetry is / Ghetto young'ns spend a lot of time alone in the crib / BET on the screen, walls and posters of BIG." But Smith recalled giving her son a stimulating childhood; the first things she read to him were puffy bathtub books.

"You have to be very intuitive to their needs," she told the audience. "I saw from the time he was young that he loved to read." As he grew older, she introduced him to writers like Sonia Sanchez, Chester Himes, and Walter Mosley, and brought newspapers into the house. "We read the *Daily News*, but I always made sure we also had the New York *Times*," she said.

Meshelle asked the panelists to offer advice for mothers raising boys alone.

"Ladies, when it's just you and your son, just remember, he is not the man of the house," Mack, who has a five-year-old son, said.

"Dr. Hines says she never says anything negative about Common's dad," Meshelle said. "They hooked up, it didn't work out. That was it."

"Dante met his dad when he was seven years old," Smith said. "We were on the bus to Jersey, and he asked me, 'What am I going to call him? Uncle Dad?' I said, 'Sure.' A few hours later, I got a call from his father: 'What's this Uncle Dad shit?'"

Mos Def has a song about his mother called "Umi Says." The chorus begins, "My Umi said shine your light on the world / Shine your light for the world to see." This was something that Smith said to Mos Def, who is now thirty-five, when he was around twelve. "He was bummed out from going on auditions," she recalled. "I was fixing dinner and I was telling him, 'Don't worry, just shine your light.' He was so young then that it was amazing that, years later, he remembered what I said that day in the kitchen."

Toward the end of the panel, Smith discussed her son's early work. When Mos Def was in fourth grade, he entered the local Malcolm X Poetry Contest. "He wrote an essay about a pregnant mom with twins—the embryos were talking to each other," she said. "He won, and his teacher said, 'You need to keep an eye on this boy.'"

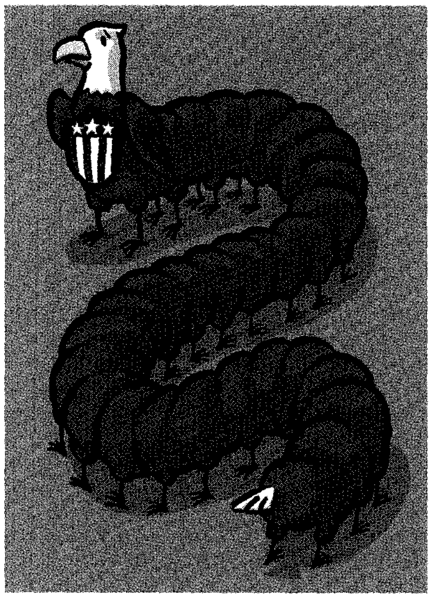
—*Doree Shafrir*

THE FINANCIAL PAGE
FIFTY WAYS TO KILL RECOVERY

If you came up with a list of obstacles to economic recovery in this country, it would include all the usual suspects—our still weak banking system, falling house prices, overindebted consumers, cautious companies. But here are fifty culprits you might not have thought of: the states. Federalism, often described as one of the great strengths of the American system, has become a serious impediment to reversing the downturn.

It's easy enough, of course, to mock state governments nowadays, what with California issuing I.O.U.s to pay its bills and New York's statehouse becoming the site of palace coups and senatorial sit-ins. But the real problem isn't the fecklessness of local politicians. It's the ordinary way in which state governments go about their business. Think about the $787-billion federal stimulus package. It's built on the idea that during serious economic downturns the government can use spending increases and tax cuts to counteract the effects of consumers who are cutting back on spending and businesses that are cutting back on investment. So fiscal policy at the national level is countercyclical: as the economy shrinks, government expands. At the state level, though, the opposite is happening. Nearly every state government is required to balance its budget. When times are bad, jobs vanish, sales plummet, investment declines, and tax revenues fall precipitously—in New York, for instance, state revenues in April and May were down thirty-six per cent from a year earlier. So states have to raise taxes or cut spending, or both, and that's precisely what they're doing: states from New Jersey to Oregon have raised taxes in the past year, while significant budget cuts have become routine and are likely to get only deeper in the year ahead. The states' fiscal policy, then, is procyclical: it's amplifying the effects of the downturn, instead of mitigating them. Even as the federal government is pouring money into the economy, state governments are effectively taking it out. It's a push-me, pull-you approach to fighting the recession.

Now, state cutbacks have not been as severe as they might have been, thanks to the stimulus plan, which includes roughly $140 billion in aid to local governments. That aid, according to a recent study by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, has covered thirty to forty per cent of the states' budget shortfalls. Money for the states translates directly into jobs not lost and services not cut—which is why you can make a good case that more of the stimulus should have gone to state aid. Yet there's no sign that those budget gaps are getting smaller, and, as the federal money runs out, state tax increases and spending cutbacks are only going to become more common. In the midst of this downturn, some of the biggest players in the economy—state and local governments together account for about thirteen per cent of G.D.P.—will be doing precisely the wrong thing.



CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

Fiscal federalism also makes it harder to spend the stimulus money efficiently. Much of the tens of billions of dollars that will be spent on roads, for instance, will be funnelled through the states. As a result, a disproportionate amount of the money will be spent in rural areas (which exert disproportionate influence on state governments), leaving cities—which happen to have most of the people and most of the traffic—shortchanged. The top eighty-five metropolitan areas in the country are responsible for about three-quarters of the country's G.D.P. Yet less than half of the road money will be invested there. The billions in stimulus money that's going to high-speed rail will likely be spent more sensibly, since the Obama Administration has placed a premium on interstate coöperation in building the network. Still, whether we end up with true regional, let alone national, rapid-transit networks will depend largely on decisions made at the state, rather than the national, level. In other words, you may be able to get from Miami to Orlando quickly, but it could be a slow train (at best) to the rest of the country.

Even more important, federalism is getting in the way of the creation of a "smart" American power grid. This would involve turning the current hodgepodge of regional and state grids into a genuinely national grid, which would detect and respond to problems as they happen, giving users more information about and control over their electricity use, and so on. It could also dramatically reduce our dependence on oil. Wind power could eventually produce as much as twenty per cent of the energy that America consumes. The problem is that the places where most of that wind power can be generated tend to be a long way from the places where most of that power would be consumed. A new grid would enable us to get the power to where it's needed. But since nobody likes power lines running through his property, building the grid would require overriding or placating the states—and the prospects of that aren't great.

The tension between state and national interests isn't new: it dates back to clashes in the early Republic over programs for "internal improvements." Of course, the federal government is far bigger than it once was, and yet in the past two decades we've delegated more authority, not less, to the states. The logic of this was clear: people who are closer to a problem often know better how to deal with it. But matters of a truly interstate nature, like the power grid, can't be dealt with on a state-by-state basis. And fiscal policy is undermined if the federal government is doing one thing and the states are doing another. It's a global economy. It would be helpful to have a genuinely national government.

—*James Surowiecki*

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DEPT. OF FINANCE

COCKSURE

Banks, battles, and the psychology of overconfidence.

BY MALCOLM GLADWELL

In 1996, an investor named Henry de Kwiatkowski sued Bear Stearns for negligence and breach of fiduciary duty. De Kwiatkowski had made—and then lost—hundreds of millions of dollars by betting on the direction of the dollar, and he blamed his bankers for his reversals. The district court ruled in de Kwiatkowski's favor, ultimately awarding him $164.5 million in damages. But Bear Stearns appealed—successfully—and in William D. Cohan's engrossing account of the fall of Bear Stearns, "House of Cards," the firm's former chairman and C.E.O. Jimmy Cayne tells the story of what happened on the day of the hearing:

> Their lead lawyer turned out to be about a 300-pound fag from Long Island . . . a really irritating guy who had cross-examined me and tried to kick the shit out of me in the lower court trial. Now when we walk into the courtroom for the appeal, they're arguing another case and we have to wait until they're finished. And I stopped this guy. I had to take a piss. I went into the bathroom to take a piss and came back and sat down. Then I see my blood enemy stand up and he's going to the bathroom. So I wait till he passes and then I follow him in and it's just he and I in the bathroom. And I said to him, "Today you're going to get your ass kicked, big." He ran out of the room. He thought I might have wanted to start it right there and then.

At the time Cayne said this, Bear Stearns had spectacularly collapsed. The eighty-five-year-old investment bank, with its shiny new billion-dollar headquarters and its storied history, was swallowed whole by J. P. Morgan Chase. Cayne himself had lost close to a billion dollars. His reputation—forty years in the making—was in ruins, especially when it came out that, during Bear's final, critical months, he'd spent an inordinate amount of time on the golf course.

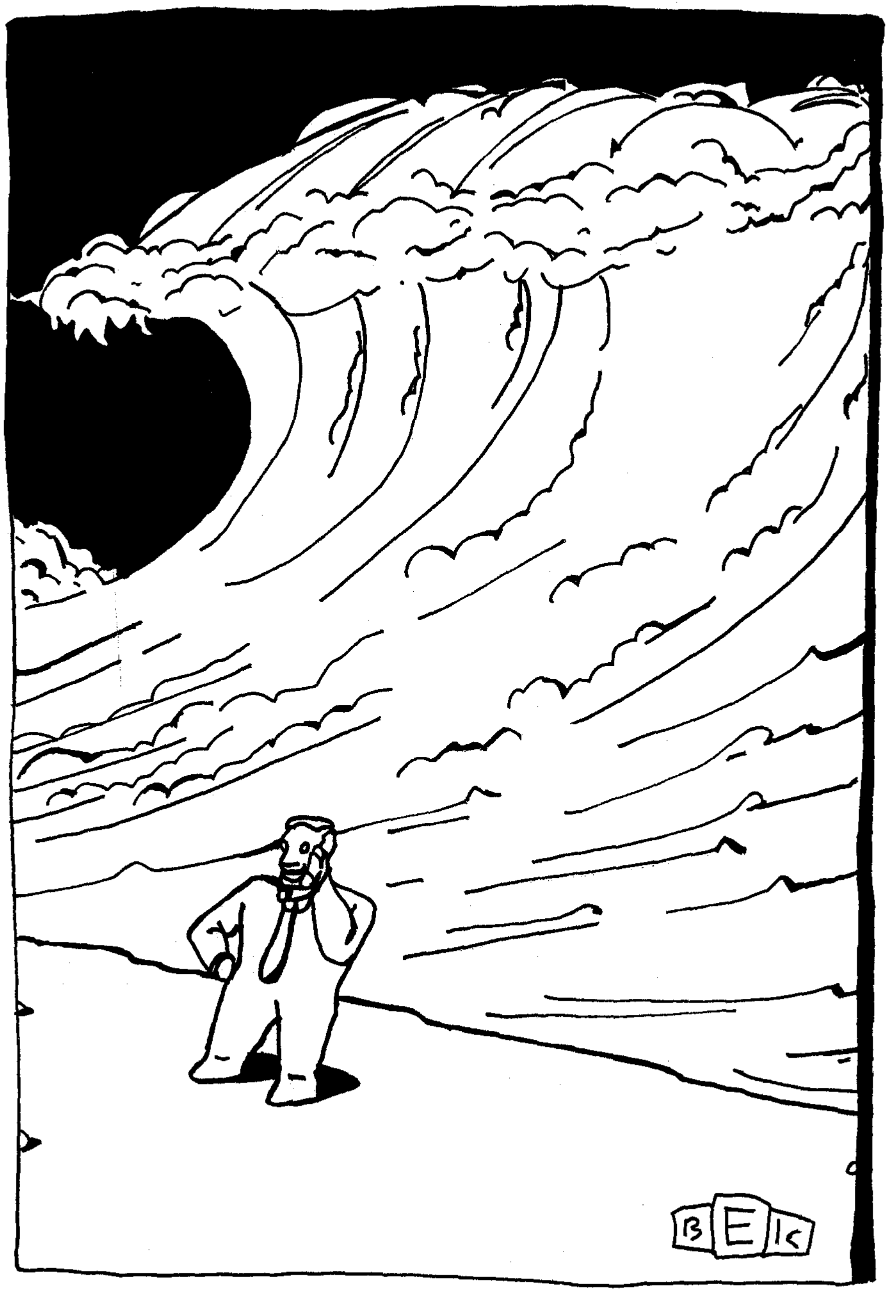
Did Cayne think long and hard about how he wanted to make his case to Cohan? He must have. Cayne understood selling; he started out as a photocopier salesman, working the nine-hundred-mile stretch between Boise and Salt Lake City, and ended up among the highest-paid executives in banking. He was known as one of the savviest men on the Street, a master tactician, a brilliant gamesman. "Jimmy had it all," Bill Bamber, a former Bear senior managing director, writes in "Bear Trap: The Fall of Bear Stearns and the Panic of 2008" (a book co-written by Andrew Spencer). "The ability to read an opponent. The ability to objectively analyze his own strengths and weaknesses. . . . He knew how to exploit others' weaknesses—and their strengths, for that matter—as a way to further his own gain. He knew when to take his losses and live to fight another day."

Cohan asked Cayne about the last days of Bear Stearns, in the spring of 2008. Wall Street had become so spooked by rumors about the firm's financial status that investors withdrew their capital, and no one would lend Bear the money required for its day-to-day operations. The bank received some government money, via J. P. Morgan. But Timothy Geithner, then the head of the New York Federal Reserve Bank, didn't open the Fed's so-called "discount window" to investment banks until J. P. Morgan's acquisition of Bear was under way. What did Cayne think of Geithner? Picture the scene. The journalist in one chair, Cayne in another. Between them, a tape recorder. And the savviest man on Wall Street sets out to salvage his good name:

> The audacity of that prick in front of the American people announcing he was deciding whether or not a firm of this stature and this whatever was good enough to get a loan. Like he was the determining factor, and it's like a flea on his back, floating down underneath the Golden Gate Bridge, getting a hard-on, saying, "Raise the bridge." This guy thinks he's got a big dick. He's got nothing, except maybe a boyfriend.

Since the beginning of the financial crisis, there have been two principal explanations for why so many banks made such disastrous decisions. The first is structural. Regulators did not regulate. Institutions failed to function as they should. Rules and guidelines were either inadequate or ignored. The second explanation is that Wall Street was incompetent, that the traders and investors didn't know enough, that they made extravagant bets without understanding the consequences. But the first wave of postmortems on the crash suggests a third possibility: that the roots of Wall Street's crisis were not structural or cognitive so much as they were psychological.

In "Military Misfortunes," the historians Eliot Cohen and John Gooch offer, as a textbook example of this kind of failure, the British-led invasion of Gallipoli, in 1915. Gallipoli is a peninsula in southern Turkey, jutting out into the Aegean. The British hoped that by landing an army there they could make an end run around the stalemate on the Western Front, and give themselves a clear shot at the soft underbelly of Germany. It was a brilliant and daring strategy. "In my judgment, it would have produced a far greater effect upon the whole conduct of the war than anything [else]," the British Prime Minister H. H. Asquith later concluded. But the invasion ended in disaster, and Cohen and Gooch find the roots of that disaster in the curious complacency displayed by the British.



As we grow older and more experienced, we overrate the accuracy of our judgments.

BRUCE ERIC KAPLAN

The invasion required a large-scale amphibious landing, something the British had little experience with. It then required combat against a foe dug into ravines and rocky outcroppings and hills and thickly vegetated landscapes that Cohen and Gooch call "one of the finest natural fortresses in the world." Yet the British never bothered to draw up a formal plan of operations. The British military leadership had originally estimated that the Allies would need a hundred and fifty thousand troops to take Gallipoli. Only seventy thousand were sent. The British troops should have had artillery—more than three hundred guns. They took a hundred and eighteen, and, for the most part, neglected to bring howitzers, trench mortars, or grenades. Command of the landing at Sulva Bay—the most critical element of the attack—was given to Frederick Stopford, a retired officer whose experience was largely administrative. Stopford had two days during which he had a ten-to-one advantage over the Turks and could easily have seized the highlands overlooking the bay. Instead, his troops lingered on the beach, while Stopford lounged offshore, aboard a command ship. Winston Churchill later described the scene as "the placid, prudent, elderly English gentleman with his 20,000 men spread around the beaches, the front lines sitting on the tops of shallow trenches, smoking and cooking, with here and there an occasional rifle shot, others bathing by hundreds in the bright blue bay where, disturbed hardly by a single shell, floated the great ships of war." When word of Stopford's ineptitude reached the British commander, Sir Ian Hamilton, he rushed to Sulva Bay to intercede—although "rushed" may not be quite the right word here, since Hamilton had chosen to set up his command post on an island an hour away and it took him a good while to find a boat to take him to the scene.

Cohen and Gooch ascribe the disaster at Gallipoli to a failure to adapt—a failure to take into account how reality did not conform to their expectations. And behind that failure to adapt was a deeply psychological problem: the British simply couldn't wrap their heads around the fact that they might *have* to adapt. "Let me bring my lads face to face with Turks in the open field," Hamilton wrote in his diary before the attack. "We must beat them every time because British volunteer soldiers are superior individuals to Anatolians, Syrians or Arabs and are animated with a superior ideal and an equal joy in battle."

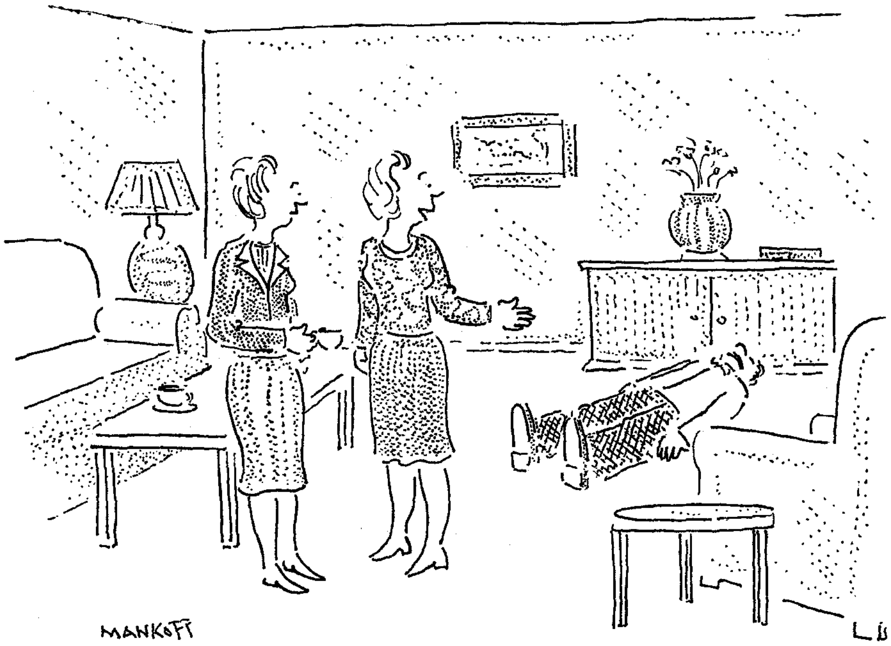
Hamilton was not a fool. Cohen and Gooch call him an experienced and "brilliant commander who was also a first-rate trainer of men and a good organizer." Nor was he entirely wrong in his assessments. The British probably were a superior fighting force. Certainly they were more numerous, especially when they held that ten-to-one advantage at Sulva Bay. Hamilton, it seems clear, was simply overconfident—and one of the things that happen to us when we become overconfident is that we start to blur the line between the kinds of things that we can control and the kinds of things that we can't. The psychologist Ellen Langer once had subjects engage in a betting game against either a self-assured, well-dressed opponent or a shy and badly dressed opponent (in Langer's delightful phrasing, the "dapper" or the "schnook" condition), and she found that her subjects bet far more aggressively when they played against the schnook. They looked at their awkward opponent and thought, I'm better than he is. Yet the game was pure chance: all the players did was draw cards at random from a deck, and see who had the high hand. This is called the "illusion of control": confidence spills over from areas where it may be warranted ("I'm savvier than that schnook") to areas where it isn't warranted at all ("and that means I'm going to draw higher cards").

At Gallipoli, the British acted as if their avowed superiority over the Turks gave them superiority over all aspects of the contest. They neglected to take into account the fact that the morning sun would be directly in the eyes of the troops as they stormed ashore. They didn't bring enough water. They didn't factor in the harsh terrain. "The attack was based on two assumptions," Cohen and Gooch write, "both of which turned out to be unwise: that the only really difficult part of the operation would be getting ashore, after which the Turks could easily be pushed off the peninsula; and that the main obstacles to a happy landing would be provided by the enemy."

Most people are inclined to use moral terms to describe overconfidence—terms like "arrogance" or "hubris." But psychologists tend to regard overconfidence as a state as much as a trait. The British at Gallipoli were victims of a situation that promoted overconfidence. Langer didn't say that it was only arrogant gamblers who upped their bets in the presence of the schnook. She argues that this is what competition does to all of us; because ability makes a difference in competitions of skill, we make the mistake of thinking that it must also make a difference in competitions of pure chance. Other studies have reached similar conclusions. As novices, we don't trust our judgment. Then we have some success, and begin to feel a little surer of ourselves. Finally, we get to the top of our game and succumb to the trap of thinking that there's nothing we can't master. As we get older and more experienced, we overestimate the accuracy of our judgments, especially when the task before us is difficult and when we're involved with something of great personal importance. The British were overconfident at Gallipoli not because Gallipoli didn't matter but, paradoxically, because it did; it was a high-stakes contest, of daunting complexity, and it is often in those circumstances that overconfidence takes root.

Several years ago, a team headed by the psychologist Mark Fenton-O'Creevy created a computer program that mimicked the ups and downs of an index like the Dow, and recruited, as subjects, members of a highly paid profession. As the line moved across the screen, Fenton-O'Creevy asked his subjects to press a series of buttons, which, they were told, might or might not affect the course of the line. At the end of the session, they were asked to rate their effectiveness in moving the line upward. The buttons had no effect at all on the line. But many of the players were convinced that their manipulation of the buttons made the index go up and up. The world these people inhabited was competitive and stressful and complex. They had been given every reason to be confident in their own judgments. If they sat down next to you, with a tape recorder, it wouldn't take much for them to believe that they had you in the palm of their hand. They were traders at an investment bank.

The high-water mark for Bear Stearns was 2003. The dollar was falling. A wave of scandals had just swept through the financial industry. The stock market was in a swoon. But Bear Stearns was an exception. In the first quarter of that year, its earnings jumped fifty-five per cent. Its return on equity was the highest on Wall Street. The firm's mortgage business was booming. Since Bear Stearns's founding, in 1923, it had always been a kind of also-ran to its more blue-chip counterparts, like Goldman Sachs and Morgan Stanley. But that year *Fortune* named it the best financial company to work for. "We are hitting on all 99 cylinders," Jimmy Cayne told a reporter for the *Times*, in the spring of that year, "so you have to ask yourself, What can we do better? And I



"And this is my late husband."

AT LAKE SCUGOG

1.
Where what I see comes to rest,
at the edge of the lake,
against what I think I see

and, up on the bank, who I am
maintains an uneasy truce
with who I fear I am,

while in the cabin's shade the gap between
the words I said
and those I remember saying

is just wide enough to contain
the remains that remain
of what I assumed I knew.

2.
Out in the canoe, the person I thought you were
gingerly trades spots
with the person you are

and what I believe I believe
sits uncomfortably next to
what I believe.

When I promised *I will always give you
what I want you to want,*
you heard, or desired to hear,

something else. As, over and in the lake,
the cormorant and its image
traced paths through the sky.

—*Troy Jollimore*

just can't decide what that might be." He went on, "Everyone says that when the markets turn around, we will suffer. But let me tell you, we are going to surprise some people this time around. Bear Stearns is a great place to be."

With the benefit of hindsight, Cayne's words read like the purest hubris. But in 2003 they would have seemed banal. These are the kinds of things that bankers say. More precisely—and here is where psychological failure becomes more problematic still—these are the kinds of things that bankers are *expected* to say. Investment banks are able to borrow billions of dollars and make huge trades because, at the end of the day, their counterparties believe they are capable of making good on their promises. Wall Street is a confidence game, in the strictest sense of that phrase.

This is what social scientists mean when they say that human overconfidence can be an adaptive trait. "In conflicts involving mutual assessment, an exaggerated assessment of the probability of winning increases the probability of winning," Richard Wrangham, a biological anthropologist at Harvard, writes. "Selection therefore favors this form of overconfidence." Winners know how to bluff. And who bluffs the best? The person who, instead of pretending to be stronger than he is, actually believes himself to be stronger than he is. According to Wrangham, self-deception reduces the chances of "behavioral leakage"; that is, of "inadvertently revealing the truth through an inappropriate behavior." This much is in keeping with what some psychologists have been telling us for years—that it can be useful to be especially optimistic about how attractive our spouse is, or how marketable our new idea is. In the words of the social psychologist Roy Baumeister, humans have an "optimal margin of illusion."

If you were a Wall Street C.E.O., there were two potential lessons to be drawn from the collapse of Bear Stearns. The first was that Jimmy Cayne was overconfident. The second was that Jimmy Cayne wasn't overconfident enough. Bear Stearns did not collapse, after all, simply because it had made bad bets. Until very close to the end, the firm had a capital cushion of more than seventeen billion dollars. The problem was that when, in early 2008, Cayne and his colleagues stood up and said that Bear was a great place to be, the rest of Wall Street no longer believed them. Clients withdrew their money, and lenders withheld funding. As the run on Bear Stearns worsened, J. P. Morgan and the Fed threw the bank a lifeline—a multibillion-dollar line of credit. But confidence matters so much on Wall Street that the lifeline had the opposite of its intended effect. As Bamber writes:

> This line-of-credit, the stop-gap measure that was supposed to solve the problem that hadn't really existed in the first place had done nothing but worsen it. When we started the week, we had no liquidity issues. But because people had said that we did have problems with our capital, it became true, even though it wasn't true when people started saying it. . . . So we were forced to find capital to offset the losses we'd sustained because somebody decided we didn't have capital when we really did. So when we finally got more capital to replace the capital we'd lost, people took that as a bad sign and pointed to the fact that we'd had no capital and had to get a loan to cover it, even when we did have the capital they said we didn't have.

Of course, one reason that overconfidence is so difficult to eradicate from expert fields like finance is that, at least some of the time, it's useful to be overconfident—or, more precisely, sometimes the only way to get out of the problems caused by overconfidence is to be even more overconfident.

From an individual perspective, it is hard to distinguish between the times when excessive optimism is good and the times when it isn't. All that we can say unequivocally is that overconfidence is, as Wrangham puts it, "globally maladaptive." When one opponent bluffs, he can score an easy victory. But when everyone bluffs, Wrangham writes, rivals end up "escalating conflicts that only one can win and suffering higher costs than they should if assessment were accurate." The British didn't just think the Turks would lose in Gallipoli; they thought that Belgium would prove to be an obstacle to Germany's advance, and that the Russians would crush the Germans in the east. The French, for their part, planned to be at the Rhine within six weeks of the start of the war, while the Germans predicted that by that point they would be on the outskirts of Paris. Every side in the First World War was bluffing, with the resolve and skill that only the deluded are capable of, and the results, of course, were catastrophic.

Jimmy Cayne grew up in Chicago, the son of a patent lawyer. He wanted to be a bookie, but he realized that it wasn't quite respectable enough. He went to Purdue University to study mechanical engineering—and became hooked on bridge. His grades suffered, and he never graduated. He got married in 1956 and was divorced within four years. "At this time, he was one of the best bridge players in Chicago," his ex-brother-in-law told Cohan. "In fact, that's the reason for the divorce. There was no other woman or anything like that. The co-respondent in their divorce was bridge. He spent all of his time playing bridge—every night. He wasn't home." He was selling scrap metal in those days, and, Cohan says, he would fall asleep on the job, exhausted from playing cards. In 1964, he moved to New York to become a professional bridge player. It was bridge that led him to his second wife, and to a job interview with Alan (Ace) Greenberg, then a senior executive at Bear Stearns. When Cayne told Greenberg that he was a bridge player, Cayne tells Cohan, "you could see the electric light bulb." Cayne goes on:

> [Greenberg] says, "How well do you play?" I said, "I play well." He said, "Like how well?" I said, "I play quite well." He says, "You don't understand." I said, "Yeah, I do. I understand. Mr. Greenberg, if you study bridge the rest of your life, if you play with the best partners and you achieve your potential, you will never play bridge like I play bridge."

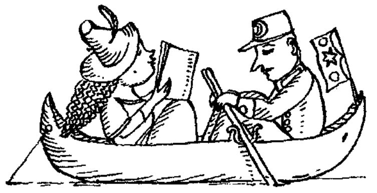
Right then and there, Cayne says, Greenberg offered him a job.

Twenty years later, the scene was repeated with Warren Spector, who went on to become a co-president of the firm. Spector had been a bridge champion as a student, and Cayne somehow heard about it. "Suddenly, out of nowhere there's a bridge player at Bear Stearns on the bond desk," Cayne recalls. Spector tells Cohan, "He called me up and said, 'Are you a bridge player?' I said, 'I used to be.' So bridge was something that he, Ace, and I all shared and talked about." As reports circulated that two of Bear Stearns's hedge funds were going under—a failure that started the bank on its long, downward spiral into collapse—Spector and Cayne were attending the Spingold K.O. bridge tournament, in Nashville. The *Wall Street Journal* reported that, of the twenty-one workdays that month, Cayne was out of the office for nearly half of them.

It makes sense that there should be an affinity between bridge and the business of Wall Street. Bridge is a contest between teams, each of which competes over a "contract"—how many tricks they think they can win in a given hand. Winning requires knowledge of the cards, an accurate sense of probabilities, steely nerves, and the ability to assess an opponent's psychology. Bridge is Wall Street in miniature, and the reason the light bulb went on when Greenberg looked at Cayne, and Cayne looked at Spector, is surely that they assumed that bridge skills could be transferred to the trading floor—that being good at the game version of Wall Street was a reasonable proxy for being good at the real-life version of Wall Street.

It isn't, however. In bridge, there is such a thing as expertise unencumbered by bias. That's because, as the psychologist Gideon Keren points out, bridge involves "related items with continuous feedback." It has rules and boundaries and situations that repeat themselves and clear patterns that develop—and when a player makes a mistake of overconfidence he or she learns of the consequences of that mistake almost immediately. In other words, it's a game. But running an investment bank is not, in this sense, a game: it is not a closed world with a limited set of possibilities. It is an open world where one day a calamity can happen that no one had dreamed could happen, and where you can make a mistake of overconfidence and not personally feel the consequences for years and years—if at all. Perhaps this is part of why we play games: there is something intoxicating about pure expertise, and the real mastery we can attain around a card table or behind the wheel of a racecar emboldens us when we move into the more complex realms. "I'm good at that. I must be good at this, too," we tell ourselves, forgetting that in wars and on Wall Street there is no such thing as absolute expertise, that every step taken toward mastery brings with it an increased risk of mastery's curse. Cayne must have come back from the Spingold bridge tournament fortified in his belief in his own infallibility. And the striking thing about his conversations with Cohan is that nothing that had happened since seemed to have shaken that belief.

"When I left," Cayne told Cohan, speaking of his final day at Bear Stearns, "I had three different meetings. The first was with the president's advisory group, which was about eighty people. There wasn't a dry eye. Standing ovation. I was crying." Until the very end, he evidently saw the world that he wanted to see. "The second meeting was with the retail sales force on the Web," he goes on. "Standing ovation. And the third was a partners' meeting that night for me to tell them that I was stepping down. Standing ovation, of the whole auditorium." ♦



BRAVE NEW WORLD DEPARTMENT

From the Baltimore Sun.

Some disgruntled viewers remain in the dark after last week's digital television switch-over.

"We were not able to watch 60 Minutes on Channel 13," said Hanuman Agrawal, 73, a retired Owings Mills resident. "My wife had to read her magazine and books. It was an enormous inconvenience."

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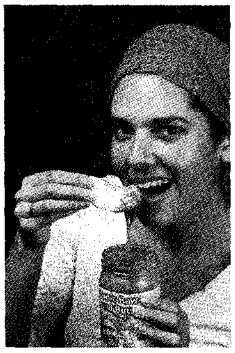

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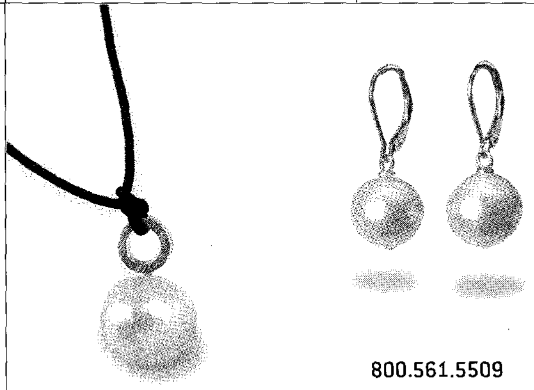

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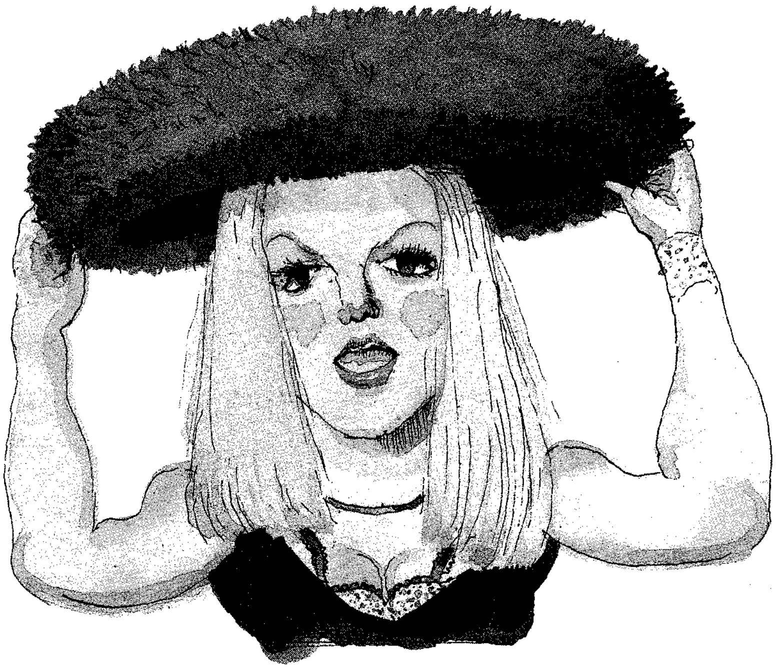
BRITNEY'S CONVERSION DIARY

BY ANDY BOROWITZ



BARRY BLITT

> Britney Spears has never been one to take things slowly when it comes to relationships. So it's no surprise she's considering converting to Judaism to show her commitment to new bloke Jason Trawick. The singer has been spotted wearing a necklace with the Star of David symbol on during her world tour. She has even recruited a rabbi to help her study the faith.
>
> —*The Sun.*

Shalom, Diary:

I think Rabbi Pearlstein is really pissed at me. Today in Jewish class he was going through the Halakha, which I thought was the Jewish word for Hannah Montana but turns out to be like a whole bunch of boring laws about days of the week and pork and shit, and I was like, "Rabbi P., is there any way you could break this down into a bunch of tweets? I'll read it on my phone on the way to rehearsal." He got so mad those curls on the sides of his head started shaking. (I don't know why he won't let my stylist snip them off. They're not a good look for him, K.?) On the plus side, he taught me this awesome Jewish trivia fact: You don't have to call Jewish people "Jewish people." It turns out they don't mind being called plain old "Jews." LOL.

Shalom, Diary:

Here's how Brit sees it: When a person is converting to Judaism, he or she should totally get points for things they've done that already make them part Jewish. Like, let's say to be a Jewess you need twenty points. I think I have already earned points for the following Jewish thingies:

—Dating a hot Jew: two points. I think dating a Jew makes you partly Jewish, and the hotter the Jew the more points. Dating Jason wins me two points (tho I would get way more if I was dating that über-hot Jew in Maroon 5). Dating someone you met on JDate and basically just settled for gets you no points. (Snap!!!)

—Kissing another Jewess on TV: four points. O.K., maybe this isn't in the Torah or anything, but it is a great moment in Jewish history, and personally, as a Jew-in-training, I am very proud to have been a part of it: the 2003 MTV Video Music Awards, when I kissed Madonna, who is basically even more Jewish than Rabbi Pearlstein. Madonna is so Jewish I call her Mezuzah. (LMAO, Brit!!!) This is because of all the hot Jewish boyfriends she has had over the aeons, including her latest, Jesus Luz. (Everyone knows Jesus is a Jewish name—look it up.) If you count all of Madonna's points for dating hot Jews, she would have eighty, which would make her equal to like four Jews, which must be more than there are in all of major-league baseball.

—Being persecuted: eight points. Rabbi Pearlstein goes on and on and on about how persecuted the Jews were in olden days, but, hello, did they ever have to deal with TMZ shoving a camera in their crotch every time they got out of a limo? I don't think so!!!

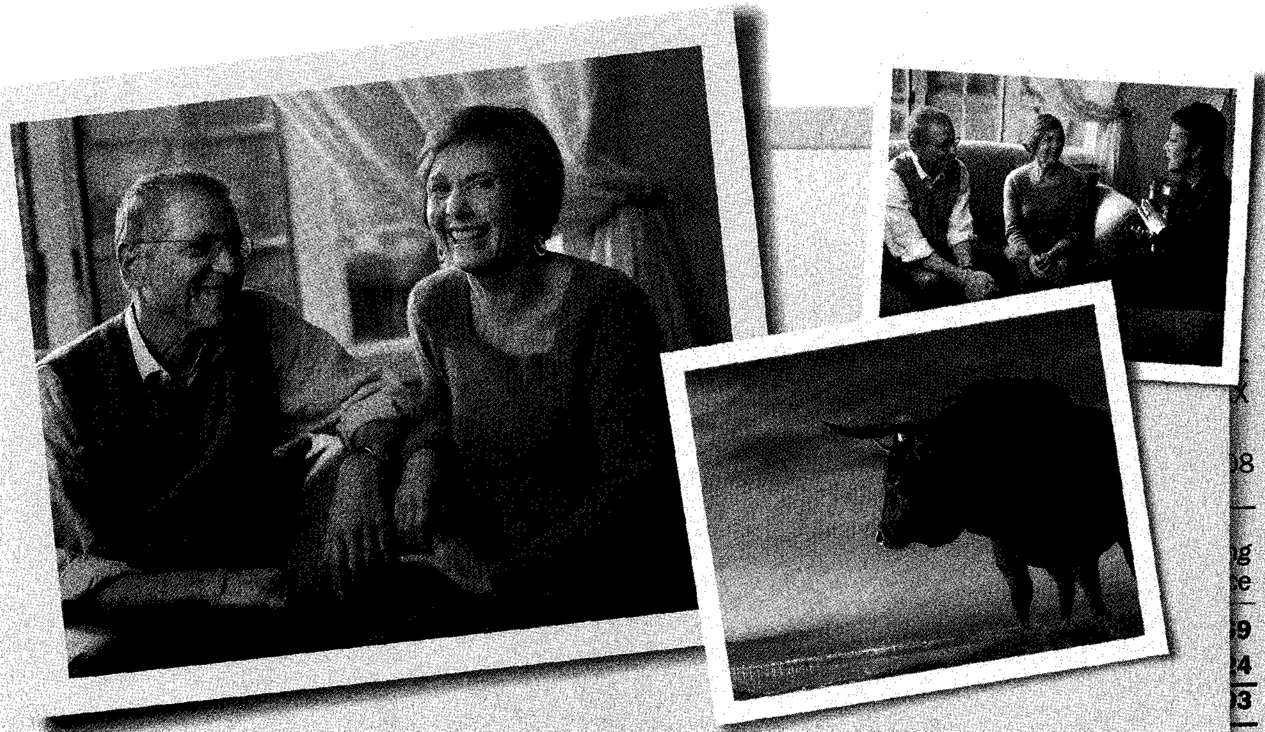
If you add my two points for dating a hot Jew to my four points for kissing a Jewess to my eight points for being persecuted, you get (come on, iPhone calculator) . . . fourteen Jew points!!! I should totally be able to get the other six I need by buying a Star of David toe ring.

Shalom, Diary:

Got verklempt last night with Jason when I told him how close I was to joining his tribe and all. Felt kinda guilty that my spiritual journey has been so easy, what with my already being mostly Jewish, but then Jason explained that feeling guilty just makes you Jewisher, so it's all good.

Dear Diary:

I am so over Rabbi Pearlstein!!! Here's what went down: I like went to his house to explain my awesome Jewish point system, and I'm like ringing the doorbell 4-EVAH, and then he finally comes to the door and there go his curly hairs again, and he's like, "Do you have ANY idea what DAY it is???" And I'm like, no, and he's like, "Jews aren't supposed to answer the doorbell on Saturdays." And I'm like, "Hello, isn't that the Amish?" He seriously needs to check his facts!!! Anyway, I'm donezo with this whole Jewish thing. Saturdays are my day to party, and no one, not even Yahweh or whatever, fucks with that. Note to Brit: Find new religion that Jason and I can both convert to. Maybe Hindu? I'd look amazing with one of those cute jewels in my head. ♦



■ WHEN THE ECONOMY PUSHED THEIR RETIREMENT OFF TRACK, WE HELPED PUT IT BACK ON.

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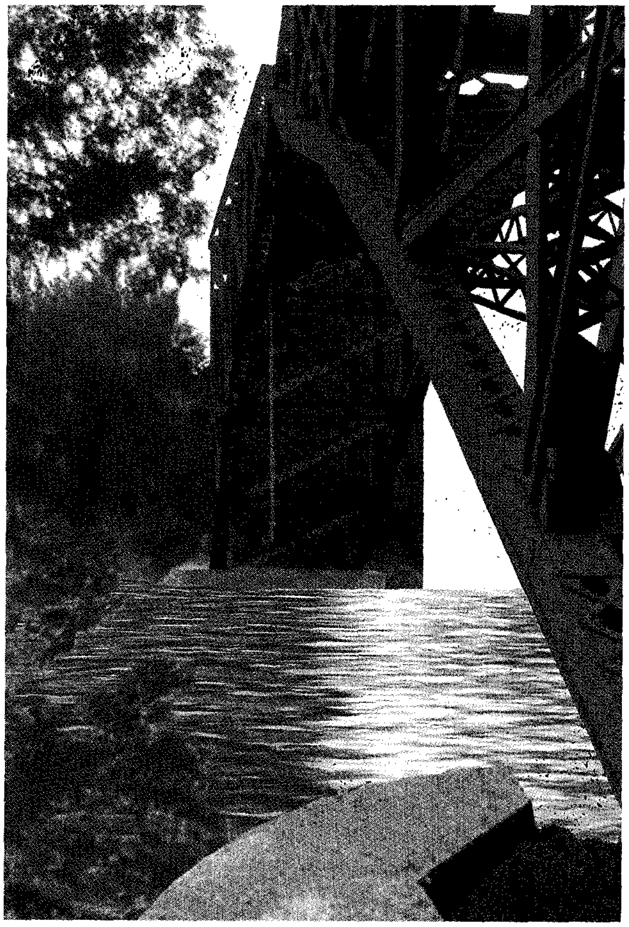
ANNALS OF CRIME

AT THE TRAIN BRIDGE

Trouble on a summer's afternoon at the swimming hole.

BY CALVIN TRILLIN

Scott Johnson sees himself as one of those guys who never caught a break. "Seems like whatever I did was never enough," he told the police in one interview. "It seems like whenever I was almost at the point of obtaining something or getting somewhere, seems like something would happen and take it away. You know, it seems like it's been like that way through my whole life." The people who were affected by the crimes he committed see things differently. One of them has said, "Scott Johnson wanted to blame everyone and everything for his pathetic life." At the time of the crimes, the summer of 2008, Johnson's life would have indeed struck many people as pathetic. At thirty-eight—a healthy and fit and presentable thirty-eight—he was living with his mother in Kingsford, Michigan, having retreated in 2001 from an increasingly unsuccessful decade in Louisiana. Kingsford is just across the Menominee River from northern Wisconsin, at the mainland edge of what people in Michigan call the Upper Peninsula, or the U.P.—a vast, underpopulated, heavily wooded landmass that extends into the Great Lakes. In growing up in Kingsford and in the contiguous city of Iron Mountain, Johnson could claim to have been shortchanged when it came to fathers—his biological father left when Scott was an infant and his stepfather could apparently be a violent drunk—but his mother seemed devoted to him. Years later, after the crimes, she still talked about his smile and the twinkle in his eye. "I thought I was the luckiest mom alive to have a son like Scott," she said. Johnson actually had some pleasant memories of his childhood, particularly of hunting in the woods and target shooting. "He said that by the age of nine he received his first weapon, a single shot 20 gauge as a gift from his mother," one of the court-appointed psychologists who examined Johnson reported. "Later, he received from her a 30/30 rifle. He described these gifts as not inconsistent or unusual among his peer group or within the rural culture of upper Michigan."



On the banks of the river, there is a feeling of total isolation.

ILLUSTRATION BY EUGENE EPPS; PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY THERESA PETERSON

Johnson got to Louisiana through the Army. Shortly after graduating from Kingsford High School, where he'd finished in the top half of his class, he left for basic training, and he was eventually assigned to Fort Polk. At a Baptist church, he met a young woman named Theresa, whose father was also in the Army, and in 1991 they were married. "That appears to be when everything started to go bad," the judge in Johnson's case later said. You could indeed see Johnson's marriage as the beginning of his problems or you could see it as a sort of canvas on which his problems became visible. The first year or so was fine, his wife later said, but he became controlling and abusive, particularly after he finished his Army hitch and they moved to Shreveport. By 1994, he'd begun to threaten to kill her. "Mrs. Johnson related that the defendant would constantly remind her of how stupid and worthless that he thought she was," the pre-sentence report on Scott Johnson said. When Theresa Johnson was five months pregnant with their daughter—their first child, a boy, had been born five years before—he pushed her down because she had failed to mail some Christmas cards when he wanted them mailed. The last straw came in 1999, when she confronted him about leaving their daughter in the back yard alone. According to the report, he got so angry that he threw the family cat against the wall hard enough to render it unconscious. When Theresa Johnson returned from the back yard with the daughter in her arms, he was pointing a rifle at her chest from approximately eight feet away. Although her memory of the incident is almost blank after that moment—she has surmised that she must have been in shock—she remembers one remark by her husband: "Look what you made me do." She and the children left for Ohio, where she had family, and she filed for divorce.

After his discharge, Johnson had held a succession of jobs. He worked in a V.A. hospital. He worked in a center for troubled adolescents. He worked as a shuttle driver for a Ramada Inn. He worked at a convenience store. His stories about how his various types of employment came to an end tend to involve some sort of altercation brought about by the unfairness of his employer. According to one psychologist, Johnson's stories in general tended to involve "the ways in which he has been mistreated by others and about his own superior assets and virtues." That was true of what he said about the National Guard, which he had joined after his active-duty Army service was over. He'd enrolled in Officer Candidate School, but eventually washed out. By his account, he'd taken two days off to attend his grandmother's funeral and "they got pissed off and fucked with me a lot after that. It was very unprofessional." When his wife divorced him, he was in the final year of a five-year apprentice plumbing program, but he dropped out without getting a plumbing license.

After 2001, he no longer saw his children. By the next year, he had begun skipping child-support payments. Theresa Johnson reported some phone calls threatening violence. He had passed some bad checks at a gun-and-knife show—one of them as payment for a .308 semi-automatic rifle. "I was depressed and drinking a lot and smoking pot," he told one of the psychologists. "I was self-destructing. I quit my job, wrote some bad checks, and ran before they could catch me. . . . I got a passport and planned to leave the country but then I went up to Kingsford to see my mom before I left and then it just got easy to stay in Michigan. . . . I couldn't work because they'd catch me, so I did a couple of little jobs or got money from my mom and brother. I just leeched off of them."

That arrangement lasted for six or seven years. Jobs were not as easy to find as they had once been in the part of the U.P. which borders Wisconsin—the iron ore that left names like Iron Mountain and Iron River and Vulcan played out decades ago; the forest-products industry has not been in a boom—but Johnson didn't try. In his view, the way to avoid the burden of child support and the threat of arrest for check-kiting was to "go off the grid." His only form of work was maintenance on his mother's house, a modest bungalow not far from the Menominee River. He stuck to himself, gradually not even eating meals with his mother and an older half brother, who also lived there. He did a lot of exercising. By his estimation, he ran eight to ten miles a day and rode his bicycle thirty miles a day. Sometimes he swam in the Menominee, at a swimming hole known locally as the train bridge.

Less than a mile from Johnson's mother's house, Skidmore Drive begins as a regular street but then turns into a gravel road. At the end of the gravel road, a footpath continues through the woods. After half a mile or so, the path veers sharply toward some railroad tracks that lead to a railroad bridge crossing high over the Menominee River. Side paths lead down to the riverbank. The Menominee is wide and slow there. Tall trees grow on either side, so that someone on the river's bank has a feeling of total isolation. Even by the standards of the U.P., where no one lives far from sylvan beauty, it's a gorgeous spot. For generations, people from the Iron Mountain and Kingsford area, particularly young people, have come to the train bridge to swim and to drop into the river from a rope that hangs from the bridge's superstructure and to drink beer in a place where there is nobody asking for your proof of age. On the Wisconsin side, there's another mile or so of woods between the river and the town of Niagara. It was in those woods that, around 2004, Scott Johnson secreted some supplies—a sleeping bag, clothes, a knife. In the fissure of a rock, he hid the rifle he'd bought at the Louisiana gun-and-knife show. To police detectives, he later explained this preparation with a maxim: "If you fail to plan, you can plan on failure."

Johnson's routine was not the sort of routine that led to a lot of contact with women. Shortly after his return, he had lived with a woman briefly, but by the summer of 2008 he had not been with a woman in six years. The previous winter, at the Family Dollar store in Kingsford, he'd met a young woman who lived near him, and they had been in each other's company for several months in a platonic way. ("He

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knew that I don't even like being touched," she later said.) He stopped at her place now and then to chat or to help her with her garden. They sometimes took walks or bike rides—including a couple to the train bridge, which she had somehow never visited before. Then, on July 30, 2008, he asked her if she wanted to go for a bike ride. They went to the train bridge. "We went for a bike ride together in the evening," the young woman later wrote in a statement to the authorities. "We walked into the woods in East Kingsford and crossed the train bridge into Wisconsin. We were alone. He led me into the woods that was off of one of the trails and that's when he put his hands under my tank top and shoved me to the ground and pulled my pants and underpants off and he forced himself into me. I begged him to stop, but he wouldn't. I said 'NO' several times as he was on me but he wouldn't listen."

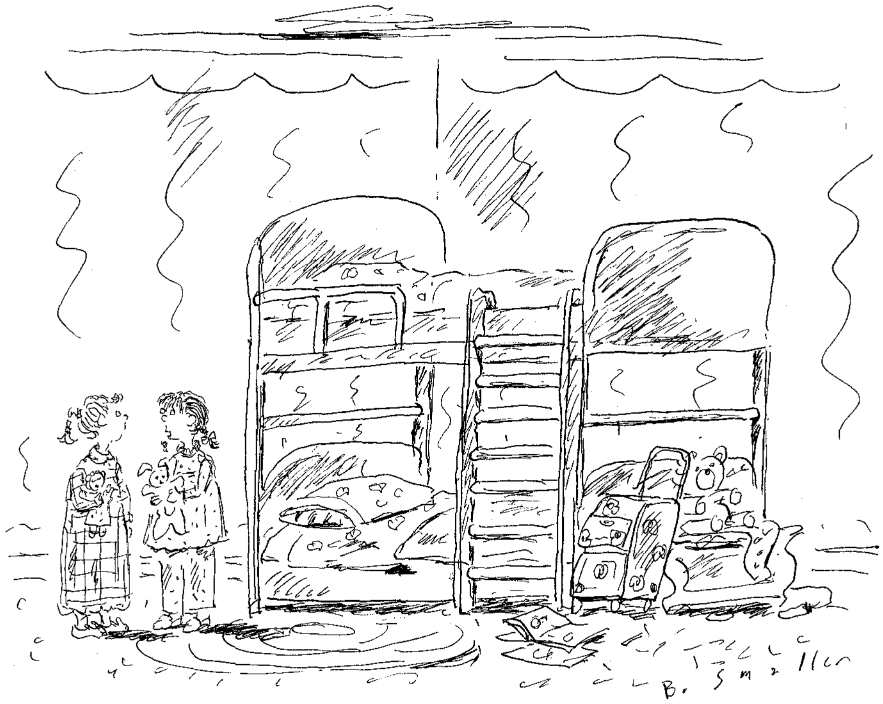
Johnson later offered another version of the event—in his version, he did not manage to complete the act—but he didn't deny that a sexual assault had taken place. He has said that, particularly because he didn't consider the young woman in question nearly as attractive as some of the women he'd known when he had a job and money, he became enraged when she rejected his advance. Apparently, he pleaded with her not to phone the police. He said that she could punish him anyway that she wanted, including beating him with a baseball bat. As he saw it, if she went to the police he'd be wanted in Louisiana for passing bad checks and in Ohio for failure to provide child support and in Wisconsin for sexual assault. He dreaded the thought of being sent to jail as a sex offender. That night, he stayed in the woods. When he went by his mother's house the next day, she told him that the police had been by and wanted to speak to him. He said he would straighten everything out after he had something to eat, and asked for ten dollars to go to Subway. "I went and got something to eat so I could sit down and think about it," he later said. "What am I gonna do? Am I gonna turn myself in or do the shoot 'em up thing? What am I gonna do?" By late that afternoon, he was walking over the train bridge, noticing the teen-agers who had taken advantage of a beautiful summer day to go swimming in the river below. He walked to his camp, on the Wisconsin side of the river. According to a sentencing memo prepared by Assistant Attorney General Gary Freyberg, the lead prosecutor in Johnson's case, "He put on camouflage pants, a camouflage shirt, and a camouflage floppy-brimmed hat. He exchanged the tennis shoes he was wearing for boots, and placed camouflage field bandages in the pockets of his shirt. He retrieved his disassembled .308 caliber semi-automatic rifle from a gun case stashed in a jagged rock outcropping, put the pieces together, and cleaned the rifle."

Johnson has offered several versions of what was going on in his mind as he settled into a spot that gave him a good view of the teen-agers on the Michigan bank of the river. "I'm thinking, do I go out with a bang, you know," he said in one police interview. "I got nothing to lose . . . the only power I have in this life is to take." At times, he seemed to imply that his plan was to shoot people at the train bridge in order to attract police and first responders so that he could kill as many of them as possible. ("My initial plan was to use those people as bait.") At times, he has implied that what he was planning was what is sometimes known as "suicide by cop," by putting "police in a position where they had to put me down." At times, he's said that what he contemplated doing was "balancing the scales," so that people could understand the pain he'd been through. At times, also, he has said that he had doubts that he could "really go through with this," and that he was about to dismantle his weapon when he heard people approaching.

"Tiffany Pohlson, 17, Anthony Spigarelli, 18, Katrina Coates, 17, and Derek Barnes, 18, swam across the river to Wisconsin in order to jump off of a large rock overhanging the river located west of the defendant's firing position," Freyberg's sentencing memo says. "In swimsuits and shorts, they walked barefoot in a staggered line on a rough trail through the woods toward the rock face where the defendant waited with his assault rifle. Anthony Spigarelli was in front chatting with his best friend Derek Barnes. Tiffany Pohlson and her best friend, Katrina Coates, followed closely behind. As he waited in ambush, the defendant heard the teenagers coming toward his position. He could tell by their voices that there were two males and two females. The defendant became afraid that he was 'trapped,' that he would be discovered, and that someone would have a cell phone and he would be 'busted.' When the group was about 15 to 20 feet away, the defendant jumped up from his position. The teenagers were startled and confused by the sight of a man in camouflage and they stopped on the trail. When the defendant raised his rifle and advanced toward them, all four teenagers turned to run. As they fled, the defendant opened fire. Anthony Spigarelli was shot in the back of the head and died instantly. His body rolled down the hill toward the river until its descent was stopped by a small tree. Tiffany Pohlson was holding the hand of Katrina Coates when she was struck by a bullet to the back of her head, killing her instantly."

Johnson fired some shots at the other two teen-agers, who were fleeing through the woods. Then he turned his attention to the swimming hole and sprayed bullets at the people who were on the Michigan bank. Bryan Mort, nineteen, was seriously wounded. A teen-ager who had taken cover at the base of the bridge phoned 911 on his cell phone; as sirens approached, Johnson faded back into the woods. He had fired at least two dozen rounds.

No one knew the identity or the precise whereabouts of the shooter. Soon there were a hundred law-enforcement officers in the vicinity of the train bridge. A perimeter was formed around the woods on either side of the Menominee. Nearby houses were



"My mom says you can sleep in the top bunk if your parents will sign a release form."

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evacuated. It wasn't until eight in the evening that officers were able to reach the bodies of Anthony Spigarelli and Tiffany Pohlson. By then, Bryan Mort had been moved by boat to a ramp that was accessible to an ambulance, but he was pronounced dead at the hospital. Scott Johnson spent the night in the woods. The next morning, he dismantled his rifle, walked out of the woods near Niagara, and surrendered.

Several months later, Lisa Hoffman, of the Iron Mountain *Daily News*, wrote a series of articles recalling the teen-agers Johnson had killed. Tony Spigarelli, an outgoing young man from Iron Mountain who played soccer and hoped to study aeronautics someday, had been three weeks away from entering college. Tiffany Pohlson, who was from Vulcan, about ten miles from Iron Mountain, had been due to start her senior year in high school in the fall; her goal was to become a surgical technician. Bryan Mort, who dreamed of opening an auto shop with his brothers someday, had dropped out of school at seventeen but, after working for a while, had gone back to get his diploma. On the summer day when he happened to go to the train bridge to swim, he was two weeks away from becoming the first member of his family to go to college. The shock caused in the community by the murders of three innocent teen-agers—the mixture of disbelief and grief and rage—was intensified by the contrast between the horrific act and the tranquillity of the setting. Almost a year later, Terri Bianco-Spigarelli, as if still finding the events at the train bridge hard to believe, said of her son, "He was just going swimming."

That statement was made during Scott Johnson's sentencing hearing, this spring. Johnson had never expressed any interest in an insanity defense—what he called, in a letter from jail to his mother, "playing the coo-coo card." In one interview with a court-appointed psychologist, he said, "You don't have to be crazy to do what I did, just angry." The specialists who examined him agreed. They were unanimous in believing that he did not lack the capacity to understand the wrongfulness of his actions. In March, 2009, Johnson had changed his plea from not guilty to nolo contendere, which has the effect of a guilty plea, and the circuit-court judge, Tim Duket, had scheduled a hearing at which victims as well as Johnson would have an opportunity to speak before a sentence was imposed. No matter what was said, Johnson was expected to be sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole, the most severe penalty the state of Wisconsin has to offer.

For the family of Bryan Mort, that wasn't enough. Through a petition signed by local residents and the support of their congressman, the Morts pressed for a federal prosecution of Scott Johnson. Under a federal law passed after 9/11, acts of violence on railroad property—which is where Mort was, since the railroad's right-of-way extends fifty feet on either side of the train bridge—can be prosecuted as acts of terrorism, with sentences that include the death penalty. Four days before the sentencing hearing, friends and family of Bryan Mort gathered at the Iron Mountain cemetery on what would have been his twentieth birthday. In the Iron Mountain *Daily News* coverage of the event, the quote from Bryan's father was succinct: "The Bible says 'an eye for an eye.'"

The sentencing hearing was held in the county seat of Marinette County, a city that is also called Marinette, about an hour and a half from the scene of the crimes. The audience sat in a large, panelled room that is ordinarily used for meetings of the county board. In the earlier days of the courthouse, before an annex was built, it had been used for trials—"Equal Justice for All" is still carved over the door—and it had been temporarily changed back into a courtroom to accommodate those who had a personal stake in the outcome of Wisconsin v. Scott J. Johnson. Except for lawyers, just about everyone was dressed informally, even those who were there to speak. Two people were wearing T-shirts that said "Spigarelli Excavating." Five women in one row, including Bryan Mort's mother, Sylvia, were wearing T-shirts that said on the back "Bryan W. Mort 1989-2008" and on the front, under Bryan's picture, "Always in our hearts." Judge Duket began by reminding people that they were, in fact, in a courtroom, temporary or not, and that outbursts would not be tolerated. To back that up, more than a dozen officers from the sheriff’s office were stationed around the room. Before the Judge began the proceedings, another employee of Marinette County—a woman responsible for the care of crime victims and their families—had handed out boxes of Kleenex and packages of hard candy.

Nine months had passed since the events at the train bridge, but there was no expectation that the anger felt by the families of those killed by Johnson had dissipated. From the release of documents like police interviews, it had become clear that he was not inclined to express remorse or to beg their forgiveness. (“What do other guys in my position tell ’em? They’re sorry? What does that do for them?”) In fact, in a jailhouse interview with the Associated Press, Johnson had said that being upset over the death of the teen-agers was like being upset over spilled milk.

Given the anger at Johnson, who sat at the defense table in an orange prison jumpsuit, it was not surprising that a lot of what was said in the Marinette County courtroom seemed designed to wound him rather than to describe the loss and suffering that his crimes had caused. Tiffany Pohlson’s uncle called him a “useless piece of garbage.” Johnson was regularly reminded that he had failed at everything he’d ever attempted—including even his horrific crime, since he’d apparently intended to kill even more people than he had managed to kill. David Spigarelli, Tony’s father, concluded his statement by saying that prison would give Johnson “a chance to finally achieve something for the first time in his life, when his cellmate, Bubba, says ‘bend over I’m ready to lay this pipe.’ He will finally have achieved his master plumber’s status. . . . Me and Tony will be laughing our asses off, Scott Johnson.” Most of what Terri Bianco-Spigarelli said, through tears, seemed designed to memorialize her son rather than to excoriate the defendant, but she said that Johnson would burn in hell, because God forgives only the remorseful. “I never hated anybody,” she said. “I’m a people lover. I get along with everybody. I hate him, and I could kill him.”

Scott Johnson read a prepared speech. At the start, he said that the points he would make were based on a maxim that he’d devised when he was twelve: “The truth of the matter at hand is that the truth doesn’t count anymore. It is the quality of the lie that endures.” He had any number of complaints to make about police-interrogation quotes being taken out of context or psychologists being biased or the press getting the facts wrong, particularly about whether he had planned the shooting in advance. He reiterated his belief that no purpose would be served by saying that he was sorry for what he’d done. (“If I showed a hint of remorse, what would people say then? ‘Oh, he’s lying. Oh, he’s faking.’ ”) He said what he did regret was that he had to live among people who were liars, gullible, arrogant, and brainwashed. The audience controlled itself through most of the speech, but, when Johnson implied that money donated to the victims’ families for funeral expenses exceeded the costs of the funerals, there was shouting in the courtroom. Sylvia Mort stood up and, before the Judge could react, said, “Let me out of here!” As she stormed out, she said, loudly enough to be heard throughout the room, “Fuckin’ piece of shit!” When order had been restored, Johnson finished his remarks, closing by quoting two verses of the Louis Armstrong standard “What a Wonderful World.”

“These families have you pegged perfectly,” Judge Duket said to Johnson, when it came time to impose a sentence. He portrayed the defendant as someone who blamed others for his constant failures, who thought that he was smarter than everyone else, who craved attention, and who responded to his own problems by murdering innocent children. In addition to the harm Johnson had done to his victims and their families, the Judge said, he’d brought great suffering to his own family. Johnson’s mother had said, “The pain is so bad I wanted to die. This is like a living death,” and the daughter he professed to love, now twelve, was, according to Theresa Johnson, terrified that Scott Johnson would get out of jail and come to Ohio to kill her. “If ever there was a constellation of criminal activities that called out for maximum consecutive sentences, this would be the case,” Judge Duket said. What the prosecutor had asked for, after enumerating the cases of murder, attempted murder, and sexual assault, was three life sentences without the possibility of parole, to be served consecutively, plus two hundred and ninety-five years—a sentence that sounded as if it required something beyond longevity, in the direction of reincarnation. On the subject of sentences that can obviously not be fulfilled, Judge Duket quoted a Wisconsin Court of Appeals decision holding that such sentences can, among other things, “properly express the community’s outrage.” The Judge imposed everything that the prosecutor had asked for. Outside the courtroom, Sylvia Mort, who vowed to keep pursuing the death penalty, said of the sentence, “It’s a beginning.”

Near where the path through the woods to the train bridge begins, there is now a memorial to the three teen-agers killed in what the inscription calls “a senseless act of violence.” A small section of ground has been bricked over, and on it two benches face each other, on either side of a rectangular granite monument that has pictures of Tony Spigarelli and Tiffany Pohlson and Bryan Mort on it. The monument is also inscribed with the first verse of a William Cowper hymn, “God Moves in a Mysterious Way.” Other than the memorial, the train-bridge swimming hole is unchanged from the time the three teen-agers pictured on the monument went there to swim a year ago. It remains idyllic—a scene that could be a calendar painting depicting lazy summer days in some bucolic patch of the upper Midwest.

The young woman who was assaulted by Scott Johnson had mentioned the beauty of the spot when, to the surprise of everyone involved, she showed up at the sentencing hearing to deliver a victim’s statement about how Johnson had betrayed her with an act that still haunts her every day. The train bridge was also mentioned in the speech that Johnson made before he was sentenced. “The train bridge has been washed in the blood that I spilled,” he said. “The beauty of that place has been cursed by my actions. My memorial is made of iron and concrete.” ♦

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A REPORTER AT LARGE

THE KINDEST CUT

What sort of person gives a kidney to a stranger?

BY LARISSA MACFARQUHAR

An act that some find deeply admirable strikes others as freakish, inhuman, even repellent. Photograph by Phillip Toledano.

It was the day before Thanksgiving, and Paul Wagner was on his lunch break, reading the paper. He worked as a purchasing manager at Peirce-Phelps, in Philadelphia, a wholesale distributor of heating and air-conditioning products. He was forty years old and lived with his partner, Aaron, in a small apartment. He was pale and slightly built. He smoked and had a smoker's porous skin. His mother had died six months before, in her late fifties, of sarcoidosis. They had not had a good relationship—she'd had a heroin problem while he was growing up, and he attributed his sanity and his values to the school for troubled youths that he'd been placed in as a teen-ager—but her death had nonetheless affected him quite deeply.

Wagner considered himself a "dry person"—curt, moody, sometimes rude. He believed that, to people who didn't know him, he came off as an unsentimental type, possibly even a bit mean, though in fact he was not like that at all. He owned two cats and two elderly cocker spaniels that he had rescued from a shelter. He ran the United Way fund-raising campaign at work for three years and organized food drives for local soup kitchens. He regarded these acts not as virtuous but as duties. He believed that if his needs were met and he found himself in possession of a surplus—of money or time or wherewithal—he was obliged to share it. Share it, not give it all away: he liked nice things—he wasn't going to become Amish. But it was very, very important to him that when he met his Maker (he didn't consider himself religious, but he did believe in God) he could say that he gave more than he took.

Before he was hired at Peirce-Phelps, Wagner worked in a bank. He went from a job in a call center to managing a branch in just two years, but he quit, he says, because he believed that the incentive structure in the bank was unethical, rewarding him for steering customers to financial products that weren't in their best interest. As a young man, he worked at a day-care center, but one day he heard an employee senior to him talk nastily about another employee. He took it upon himself to inform the latter about the former, but this intervention made everybody so uncomfortable that he was fired. From this, he concluded that it was sometimes best to mind his own business and not try to do God's work for him.

Reading the paper, Wagner noticed an article that described a Web site named MatchingDonors.com, where people who needed a kidney transplant could post a message describing themselves and their situation, perhaps appending a photograph. The hope was that a stranger would see the posting and be moved to donate. Wagner typed the name of the Web site into his computer. He clicked on the "search patients" box and typed in "Philadelphia." The first patient he saw was Gail Tomas. He enlarged her photograph on his screen so that he could examine every detail. She was sitting on stairs in what appeared to be her living room. She was a woman of mixed race in her late sixties. He stared at her, searching for clues to her personality in her hair style and how she wore makeup. He inspected the stairs behind her, trying to see how clean they were. Almost immediately, he felt that she was the one. He knew that his blood and her blood would match and that he would donate a kidney to her. There was no question of backing out: having seen her picture, he felt himself to be already involved. It was like seeing a car crash—if he didn't help, he thought, he would cheapen himself.

He went home and told his partner, "Aaron, there's this lady I read about that's going to die if she doesn't get a new kidney and I've decided to give one to her." Aaron said no. Wagner told him sorry, but he was going to do it anyway. He told his sister and she said, only half joking, "What if I need a kidney someday?" He thought that that was selfish. He told her that she had a husband and two children and she could look to them, but this lady was going to die now. Talking to his father was more difficult. Some years before, his father's second wife had had kidney disease. Wagner had offered to donate to her, but she and his father had felt that it was against their principles to ask so much of a person, even a son. So they refused his offer, and, waiting for a cadaver kidney, she died. His father got very quiet for a while and then said he wished that he wouldn't go through with it.

But once Wagner had decided to donate he felt as though he had a calling. He was not usually brave about medical procedures, but somehow with this he breezed through all the tests. He was late for work almost every morning, but he was on time for every one of his hospital appointments. He wasn't anxious about pain or complications. For once in his life, he felt that God's instructions to him were absolutely clear.

Besides all the tests, there were other hurdles to be overcome. The transplant surgeon was puzzled by Wagner. He wasn't sure that he was willing to do the surgery—he was concerned that it might be a violation of his Hippocratic oath to operate on a healthy person who wasn't even related to the recipient. They met and talked for more than an hour, and, near the end of the conversation, Wagner was astonished to see that the surgeon was crying.

Wagner assumed that he and Tomas would not become friends after the surgery. He had given the matter some thought. How could they possibly have a healthy relationship, he reasoned. It would be bad for her to feel beholden to him, and it would be bad for him to have her believing that he was some kind of saint. The whole thing would just be way too freighted and creepy and was better avoided. Tomas, however, had other ideas.

Gail Tomas was a retired opera singer who had performed all over Europe, after being discovered in a master class by Licia Albanese. If Wagner was dry, she was the opposite—vivacious, chatty, candidly emotional. She had been looking for a donor for about a year. None of her family members matched her blood type, and she hadn't wanted to ask friends, so her daughter signed her up on MatchingDonors. At first, there were a few obvious no-no's—a man wrote from India to say that he would get all his testing done locally if they would send him five thousand dollars. Then, she says, there was a woman from Texas who seemed legitimate and eager to help, and they corresponded for months, but it turned out that her son, who was seven feet tall, had outgrown his liver and needed a transplant himself, and, with all that going on, the woman disappeared. "It was like someone had taken you to the altar and then all of a sudden new scenery came down and you say, 'But I thought I was getting married,'" Tomas says. "I thought, We'll never find another person, because how many people want to do this?"

Shortly before the surgery, Wagner

and Tomas met for the first time. They were both at the hospital, getting tested. Wagner had described himself as skinny, so Tomas looked around the waiting room, identified the skinniest guy in it, sailed up and introduced herself. For her, the meeting was wonderful: she felt that they'd known each other all their lives. Wagner managed to be friendly, but he was all churned up. He didn't know what to make of this exuberant lady he was giving his kidney to; he couldn't figure out what emotions he should allow himself to experience. His mother had died less than a year before, and now here he was potentially entangling himself with another very sick older woman, and what did that mean? Donating a kidney to find yourself a new mother, what could be more obviously twisted than that? He was also worried that he'd done a bad thing by allowing himself to meet Tomas at all. It made him feel guilty. Did it diminish the value of his deed to accept her gratitude? Wouldn't he be a better person if he hadn't met her and had received no thanks? Had his donation now become just a matter of gratifying his ego? By the time he got home, he felt completely drained.

The surgery itself left him feeling battered and exhausted. Afterward, when he was sitting in his hospital bed, the phone rang. A woman on the other end, who had heard about him on the local news, told him that she hoped his remaining kidney would fail quickly and kill him, because her husband had been next in line to receive a kidney and he, Wagner, had given his to someone else. Wagner asked the hospital to turn his phone off after that, but then someone wrote an article about him in the Philadelphia *Daily News*, wondering whether it was fair for him to pick his recipient, choosing who lived and who died. He couldn't understand it—he had heard about a sick woman who lived near him and he had helped her. How could that make people angry?

After he got home from the hospital, he started feeling very sad all the time. He admitted to himself that it was difficult to come down off the high of being a hero. Before the surgery, everyone he knew had made a big fuss about him; there had been a lot of hoopla at the hospital, attention from the local media. He had loved telling people that he was donating a kidney to a stranger, just to see their reactions. Now all that was over. Worse, Tomas had suddenly stopped returning his phone calls. Was she angry with him? he wondered. Looking for advice, he started posting on a Web site, Living Donors Online, and he discovered that many donors had to deal with peculiar emotions after surgery. He read about one case in which a woman had donated to her sister, but the kidney was rejected and her sister died; after that, the rest of the family stopped speaking to her. One spouse donated to the other, then the recipient spouse left the donor, perhaps because the burden of gratitude had left the marriage irredeemably distorted. That had happened quite a few times, it seemed.

Finally, worried, Wagner started calling hospitals, and he found Tomas. She'd been very sick and hadn't wanted to scare him, but now she was better, and she wanted Wagner in her life. Still smarting, he wasn't sure. She invited him to her son's wedding. He declined, several times, until finally she got angry and yelled at him, and that, somehow, for Wagner, made everything all right. If she could yell at him, then he was not always perfect in her eyes and they could have a normal friendship. She wasn't his mother, he knew that; it would be fine. In fact, Tomas did consider herself his mother, more or less. She wanted him at her house on holidays, she hounded him about smoking and taking his blood-pressure medication. But it was fine anyway.

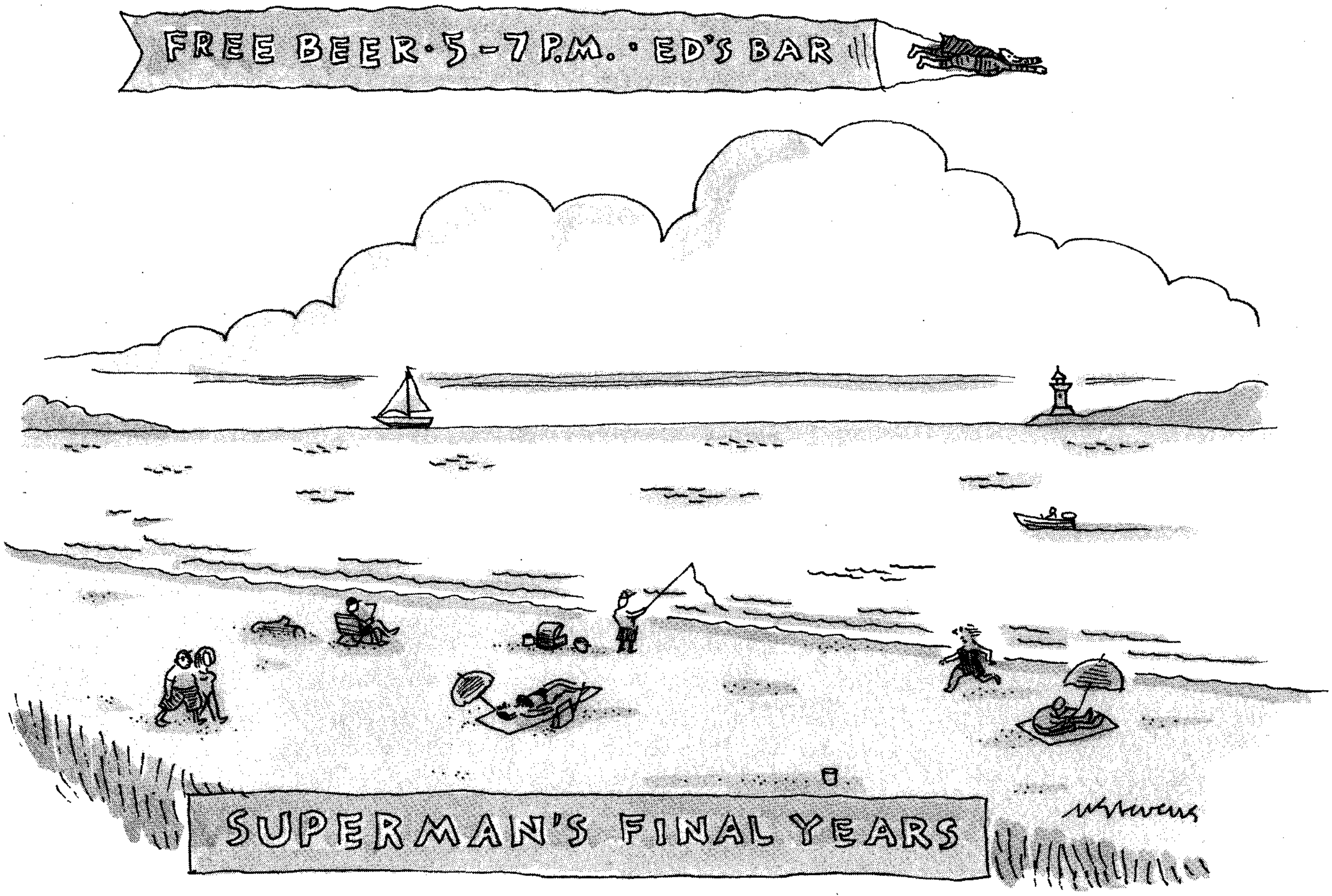
So what do you make of Paul Wagner? Do you find the idea of donating a kidney to a stranger noble? Or freakish? If the latter, is it the extremity of the act that baffles you? Does it seem crazy, giving something that precious to someone for whom you have no feeling, and whom, if you knew him, you might actually dislike?

Perhaps it's not quite as crazy as it sounds. Kidneys are now often extracted laparoscopically, which leaves only tiny scars. A donor usually feels normal again in two to four weeks, the remaining kidney growing to compensate. And the risk of complications is low. If a person gets kidney disease, it affects both kidneys, so as far as that goes a donor is not giving away his spare (though a spare kidney *is* useful if the other is damaged in a car accident, say, or if a person develops kidney cancer). Still, the carnality of the act, the violation of the body, stops people. Its moral logic seems, to some, inhumanly rational, suicidally so: If we're going to start thinking of bodies as repositories of spare parts for other people, why not donate all our organs and save many lives?

Most people find it uncomplicatedly admirable when a person risks his life to rescue a stranger from fire, or from drowning. What, then, is it about saving a stranger by giving a kidney, a far lesser risk, that people find so odd? Do they feel there is something aggressive about the act, as though the donor were implicitly rebuking them for not doing it, too? (There is no rebuke in saving a stranger from drowning—you weren't there, you couldn't have done it. And you can always imagine that you would have if you had been.) Or perhaps it's that organ donation, unlike rescue, is conceived in cold blood, and cold-blooded altruism seems nearly as sinister as cold-blooded malevolence. Perhaps only the hot-blooded, unthinking sort can now escape altruism's tainted reputation, captured in the suspicious terms for what people are really engaged in when they think they're helping (sublimation, colonialism, group selection, potlatch, socialism, co-dependency—the list goes on).

Giving a kidney to a stranger is more common than you might think. Potential donors register on MatchingDonors.com almost every day—more than seven thousand have signed up so far (though, to be sure, many of them get no further than signing up). Either through MatchingDonors or through a hospital, about six hundred have gone through with the surgery—each for his own reasons.

MatchingDonors.com was thought up five years ago by a forty-year-old entrepreneur from Canton, Massachusetts, named Paul Dooley, who had trained as a dentist and had previously founded a Web site that matched employers with job seekers. Dooley's father had needed a kidney transplant but had been told that he had no chance of reaching the top of the waiting list in



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time. After he died, Dooley wondered whether a matching Web site like the jobs site could have saved him. He asked his doctor what he thought. The doctor, Jeremiah Lowney, thought it was a bizarre idea. Why would anyone donate his kidney to a stranger he found on the Internet? It made no sense. But then he logged onto the National Kidney Foundation Web site and discovered a survey in which nearly a quarter of the respondents said they would be willing to donate a kidney to a stranger. Lowney called Dooley back, and together they started up the site.

Lowney's being a doctor gave the company credibility, but in fact MatchingDonors offered no medical services. It provided a forum for patients and donors to meet; that was all. Once a patient and a donor found one another, it would be up to each to figure out whether the other was telling the truth. Was the patient as sick, or as healthy, as he claimed? Would the donor try to extort money later? Was he as nice as he seemed? It was the Internet—nobody knew. (A couple of years ago, a middle-aged woman from Michigan donated a kidney through MatchingDonors. Two months later, she was arrested for trying to have her husband killed.)

The first patient to list himself publicly on the site was Bob Hickey, a psychologist in his mid-fifties who'd learned he had kidney cancer. At first, he'd done what his doctor told him to do: he went on dialysis, signed up on the official waiting list for a cadaver kidney in his region, and hoped that he would reach the top of the list before he died. His chances of doing so were middling. Since he lived in Colorado, he would likely get a kidney sooner than in most parts of the country—at that point, in 2000, the median waiting time where he lived was around two and a half years, less than half what it was in New York, for instance. But his transplant center told him that he should expect to wait about four years. You couldn't survive on dialysis forever, and many people did die waiting for a kidney—an average of nearly nine a day. The national list was about fifty thousand names long.

Dialysis can be a kind of death-in-life. The treatment itself is gruesome, sometimes painful—you are attached to a machine for several hours at a time, usually three or four times a week, while the machine siphons off all your blood, cleans it of toxins, and injects it back into your body. Often the process leaves you too exhausted to work, or do much of anything besides recover. After four and a half years of dialysis, Hickey, still waiting on the list, decided that he'd had enough. He would rather die. He told his wife, and she accepted his decision. He told a religious friend—a little nervously, thinking he might try to dissuade him—and the religious friend said, just give it one more month.

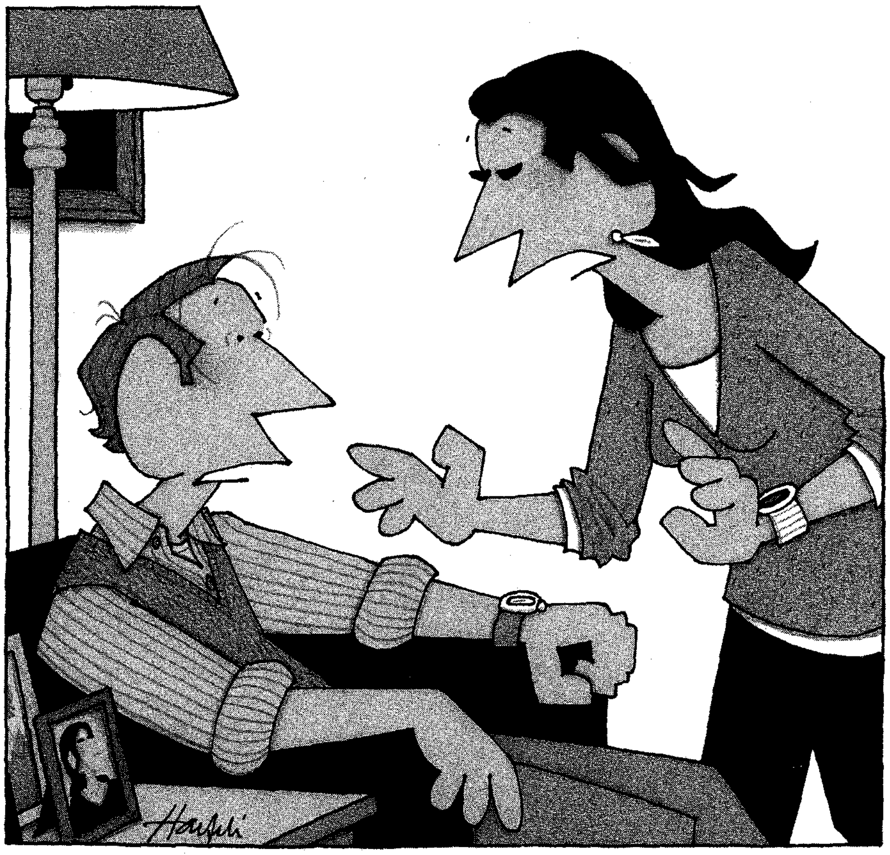
Less than a month later, Hickey saw an article in the Denver *Post* about a new company that was starting up, MatchingDonors.com. He phoned, and Dooley told him that for a patient the service cost two hundred and ninety-five dollars a month, five hundred and ninety-five dollars for life. Hickey told him he was a carpetbagger and a rip-off and hung up. After another week of dialysis, he called back and signed on. Within a month, he had dozens of offers. About fifteen per cent of them were from people looking for money or a green card, but the rest seemed legitimate. He had no idea how to sort through them, and Dooley had no idea, either—he hadn't anticipated that an excess of donors would be a problem. Hickey asked his transplant center, Presbyterian/St. Luke's Medical Center, in Denver, for advice, and was told that since he was such a big man, six feet five, he should try to find someone around his own size; that eliminated all the women. Then he eliminated all the men over fifty-five, put the rest of the names in a hat, and picked out Rob Smitty.

Rob Smitty was thirty-two years old, from Chattanooga, Tennessee. He was in a bad place in his life. He had dropped out of high school and done some time for possession of LSD. He was divorced and was behind on his child-support payments. He worked as a door-to-door salesman for a meat company. One day, he was playing spades on the Internet when a pop-up ad asked him to register as an organ donor. He googled "organ donation" and discovered that all sorts of people were trying to find kidneys online, some of whom were willing to pay. Being paid to donate a kidney sounded good to him—one person wanted to pay him a quarter of a million dollars. Then he found out that selling a kidney was illegal, and he figured that with his luck he would definitely get caught, but by then he was hooked on the cause and he decided to donate for nothing. It seemed to him that he hadn't done all that much with his life so far, and this was something worthwhile that he could accomplish and feel better about himself. Smitty wanted to pick his recipient, so he spent months online, searching. He was touched by one posting he read on a Web site about a fifteen-year-old kidney patient named Joshua, so he called the number. The woman on the phone told him it was too late—Joshua had died. "Well, I felt like I'd just taken a huge crap and stepped back into it," Smitty says. Then he came across MatchingDonors.com.

When Hickey talked to Smitty on the phone and decided he was for real, he was so excited that he jumped in his car and drove a hundred miles from Vail, where he lived, to the transplant center in Denver to deliver the good news. He said he had dozens of donors and could get everyone on the waiting list matched up immediately. The transplant people didn't react as he'd expected them to, however—they told him to be careful, he didn't know what he was getting into, making deals with strangers on the Internet. But they accepted Smitty as a donor.

On October 18, 2004, Hickey and Smitty were lying on gurneys with I.V.s in their arms, waiting for surgery to begin, when their surgeon strode angrily up to Hickey, waving a newspaper. He had just discovered, he claimed, that Hickey had found his donor through a Web site, and, since that obviously meant that Hickey was paying him, the surgery was off. "He got in my face and said, 'If you think I'm going to do a transplant on you, you've got another think coming,' " Hickey says. "I said, 'I don't know who the hell you are to treat me like this, but if this transplant isn't done today there will be more lawsuits flying around than you can contemplate.' " There were reporters and TV trucks out front, and Hickey wondered aloud to his wife as they left whether someone had found Elvis Presley alive in the hospital—he didn't realize they were there for him. His intention to file suit made the local news, the hospital's ethics committee quickly held a meeting, Hickey and Smitty promised that no illegal payments had been made, and the surgeon performed the transplant two days later.

Ever since, Hickey has made kidneys his life's work. People whose transplant centers won't deal with donors they met through the Internet call him and he steers them to surgeons who will. He raises money to compensate donors for expenses and lost wages (that sort of compensation is legal). He is fighting the kidney establishment on several fronts. He suspects, for instance, that UNOS—the United Network for Organ Sharing, the nonprofit company to which the government contracts out the management of the cadaver-organ waiting list—intimidates transplant centers into rejecting Internet donors, and, indeed, UNOS takes the position that MatchingDonors.com "exploits vulnerable populations and undermines public trust in the equitable allocation of organs." Hickey believes that it was UNOS's posi-



"You should never engage in unsupervised introspection."

tion that caused his surgeon to cancel the transplant. (Citing patient confidentiality, the surgeon declined to comment. A spokesman for UNOS denied that it engaged in intimidation, in Hickey's case or in any others.) Smitty considers himself lucky that he happened on a recipient he can be proud of. "What if I gave this guy a kidney and he's an alcoholic?" Smitty says. "I never asked. He could have gotten drunk some night and killed a family and I would have felt terrible. I wondered, Am I supposed to save him? What will happen when he goes back into society? You're messing with the future here—someone who was going to die, all of a sudden they live."

Eight days after the surgery, Smitty was jailed for nonpayment of child support. "I thought maybe the judge would cut me some slack—I donated a kidney, I can't be that bad—but it didn't happen that way," he says. Soon afterward, he was able to pay, because a man read about his case in the newspaper and decided to help him out, but he feels that he has never exonerated himself in the public mind. Before his surgery, he wanted the media to cover it, thinking it would do good to publicize the need for kidneys, but some of the articles written about him were skeptical or downright hostile. An Associated Press reporter wrote a particularly nasty piece quoting Smitty's ten-year-old daughter saying that she didn't think he was much of a hero, because he owed money to her mother. The article also implied that Smitty gave his kidney in order to make money to pay off child support, though this didn't make sense, because the person who gave him money had never heard of Smitty until afterward.

Smitty went on a TV program called "Lie Detector" and took a polygraph test in which he claimed that he hadn't been paid for his kidney, but he failed. He is still bitter about this. He suspects that the test was manipulated. "The media wanted to crucify me," he says. "A lot of people want to hate on me for doing what I did because they couldn't do it." Later, he hired a former head of the F.B.I.'s polygraph unit to administer a second test, which he passed, but nobody wanted to report on that. Still, he hasn't regretted his donation for a moment. "It's the brightest thing in my life, that I've ever done," he says. "Just to know that some people are living better lives out there because of me—little old me."

The skeptical view of altruistic donors that Hickey and Smitty's surgeon seemed to take is not unusual. Doctors tend to be deeply suspicious of them. Especially in the early days of kidney transplants, in the late sixties and early seventies, many doctors saw altruistic donation through the lens of psychoanalysis, and, viewed thus, it looked troubling indeed. What was "altruism," after all? A motive so much in conflict with primary instinct had to represent some kind of pathology. Was it masochism? Unresolved guilt? Altruistic donors, some doctors felt, were "not to be trusted," "screwballs." "These people must be abnormal—to do such a thing," one transplant surgeon said. Donating an organ to a stranger was not just not admirable, doctors felt—it was perverse, it offended the conscience. It was against human nature.

In 1967, a long-term study of living, unrelated kidney donors was initiated, with the aim of helping transplant centers form policies on these confounding individuals. The study subjected the donors to free-associative interviews, dream analyses, and Rorschach and thematic-apperception tests. Published in 1971, it found evidence, in the donors, of primitive masochism, reaction formation against early sadism, homosexual conflict, pregnancy symbolism, and penis envy. But it argued that, in this, the donors were no different from the rest of mankind, and that, after the operation, each donor reported a deep feeling of increased self-esteem—a feeling "that he had done something wholesome and natural with no indication of regret." ("Only good thing I ever did," one donor, who, according to the study, suffered from inadequate personality, said. "I'm better for it.") There were no reports of post-operative depression or physical ailments.

This study, however, didn't change anything. Forty years ago, even donors who were family members were regarded warily. Beginning in the late sixties, two academics, Renée Fox and Judith Swazey, spent years observing transplant centers, and found that surgeons and psychiatrists went to heroic lengths to draw out the conflicts and ambivalence that lay hidden beneath donors' supposed willingness to undergo surgery. If the potential donor's motivation appeared inadequately healthy, they turned him down. Billy Watson (a pseudonym), a ten-year-old boy, needed a kidney transplant in order to live, and his mother wanted to donate. But was Mrs. Watson's motivation acceptable or pathological? the doctors wondered. Mrs. Watson had nine other children—was she showing an unhealthy favoritism toward Billy by wanting to keep him alive, since the surgery would leave her temporarily unable to care properly for the others? And was this a normal family, psychologically? How stable was the Watson marriage? (After two months of debate, the doctors reluctantly decided to permit Mrs. Watson to donate.)

One man wanted to donate a kidney to his brother, but his wife opposed the idea; the renologist suspected that the man was motivated to donate in part in order to break away from his domineering spouse, and rejected the man as a donor. Another case involved Susan Thompson (also a pseudonym), a twenty-six-year-old unmarried woman. Her mother said that she wanted to save her daughter, but the transplant team noticed that, while undergoing testing, Mrs. Thompson developed gastrointestinal problems and heart palpitations. The team decided that, on an unconscious level, she didn't really want to give up her kidney, so they told her she was "not a good tissue match" and turned her down.

Doctors began to realize that to transplant an organ was to stir up the muck of familial emotions, with consequences that could not be predicted. Donation tended to bind the donor and the recipient together, sometimes with love, sometimes with guilt, or gratitude, or a feeling of physical union due to the presence of the organ of one in the other's body. The strength of these new bonds could weaken other bonds and leave families strained and distorted. If a person donated to a sibling, for instance, might he not become too close to that sibling, at the expense of his relationship with his spouse? One transplant physician believed that, after a sister donated to her brother, the sister "felt absolute control over her brother, as if she had castrated him." After the surgery, instead of going home to his wife and children, he moved into his sister's house to recover. Another man was so overcome by a feeling of obligation toward his donor sister that he couldn't stand to look at her. A son refused a kidney from his mother because, he told his surgeon, "she's devoured enough of me already." The force of gratitude could be dreadful with the gift of an organ, when no thanks seemed adequate and reciprocation was impossible. There was, Fox and Swazey observed, following the French anthropologist Marcel Mauss, something tyrannical about a gift. "Why does the benefactor love the recipient more than the recipient loves the benefactor?" the bioethicist Leon Kass mused on the subject of transplants, alluding to a passage in Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics. "Because the benefactor lives in the recipient, the way in which the poet lives in the poem."

Even in the case of cadaver donors, emotions shadowed the transplant. In fact, the burden of gratitude could be even weightier when the donor was dead, particularly if, as was often the case, the donor was young, and the death was sudden and terrible. Donor families, appreciating the magnitude of their gift, sometimes felt that the recipient had become part of their family, someone they could love and also lay claim to. One father of a dead son said to the father of the girl who had received his boy's heart, "We've always wanted a little girl, so now we're going to have her and share her with you." Many people felt that, in some quasi-animistic way, the dead beloved survived in the body of the recipient. ("My blood has adopted a child/who shuffles through my chest/carrying a doll," reads a 1970 poem, "Organ Transplant," about an adult who has received the heart of a dead girl.) People cared deeply about what happened to the remains of their dead, even when those remains consisted only of ashes; how much more potent this caring became when the remnants consisted, instead, of a pulsing kidney, or a still beating heart.

All these strong, atavistic emotions made transplant teams uncomfortable, and, over time, protocols were developed to keep transplants anonymous and families apart. A regime of emotional hygiene was put in place. Perhaps in the future, it was thought, when transplants became more ordinary, these precautions would no longer be necessary. Perhaps this attachment to the organs of the dead would come to seem as strange as the belief that a person's hair cuttings or fingernail clippings could be used to place a curse on him. Perhaps the thought of an organ living by itself, separate from its owner, would no longer seem uncanny, gothic, something out of Poe. And perhaps this change would also ease the reluctance that so many families felt toward donating the organs of a relative.

Transplants have indeed become more commonplace, and attitudes toward donation of cadaver organs have changed somewhat, but these changes are mourned by those who feel that they signal an encroaching spiritual callousness. To the ethicist Gilbert Meilaender, for instance, the reluctance that many feel toward donating organs, even after death, is not selfishness or superstition but a sign that our sense of the body as something whole, something human, something sacred, has not yet withered. A society in which everyone in cheerful rationality signed his donor card without a qualm would be, to Meilaender, a horror. The giving of an organ, by the living or the dead, should not be purged of anguish. For him, the tyranny of gratitude is not a perversion of love but the prototype of love: the bond between parents and children.

Melissa Stephens is twenty-four. On her MySpace profile she describes herself like this: "I LOVE CAKE, ask anyone. my favorite cake is funfetti with funfetti frosting. . . . i can draw paint and sculpt. i smile a lot. i like the scent clean linen from yankee candle. . . . i love my friends and i'd do anything for them. my biggest flaw is being too nice to people who are mean to me or that i dont even like. . . . valentine's day is probably my favorite 'holiday' because everything is pink and red. . . . i love ralph lauren. i dont think there is anything more to me."

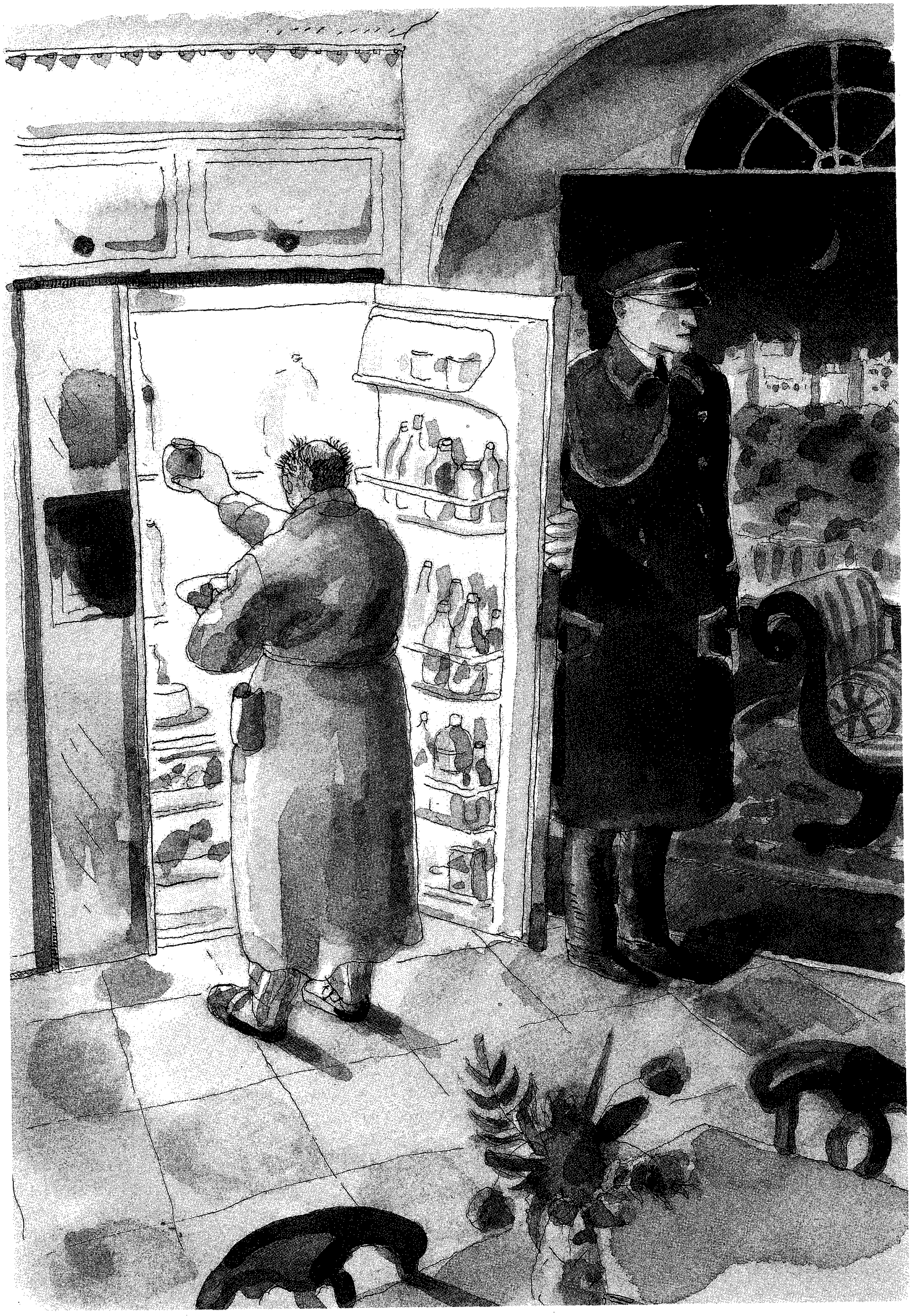
Stephens works in the administrative offices of a school for children with learning disabilities on Long Island. Previously, she thought she wanted to be a lawyer, but she quit an entry-level job in a law firm because she was shocked by the ethics of the lawyers—the office affairs, the contemptuous way they treated their clients. She grew up in upstate New York and was reared as a strict Catholic. She first heard about kidney donation in seventh grade: a parent told her health class how his child had been saved by a transplant, and the story had stuck in her head ever since—the thought that you could save someone's life.

Early last year, her grandmother died of pancreatic cancer, and she decided to do something in her memory. Even though her grandmother and she had never had a real conversation—her grandmother emigrated from South Korea late in life and never learned English—she felt inspired by her, morally and spiritually. Her grandmother had little money, but she took in travellers, including some who had escaped from North Korea, and fed them. Stephens wanted to do something that would be a fitting tribute to a person like that—something that would set an example, that would inspire other good deeds. Not just going on a sponsored walk—something big, something that people would remember.

Looking around online, she found MatchingDonors.com and searched for patients with her blood type who lived in New York. The first person didn't respond to her e-mail, so she wrote to the second, a fifty-six-year-old rock musician named Kris Randall who lived in Manhattan. Randall called her back the same day. She remembers exactly where she was when she first spoke to him: she was driving home from shopping and he called her on her cell. In the weeks following, as she was getting tested, he called her every day, and they talked for hours. He told her all about his life, his girlfriend, his friends, and how much it would mean to him to have a chance to live. He told her he felt that he was drowning and his friends had thrown him life preservers but she was the only one swimming out to save him. He told her about his musical career, and she formed the impression that he had lots of famous friends, and that after she donated a kidney to him she would be famous, too.

At the time Stephens e-mailed him, Randall had been told that he had about six weeks to live. He had started labelling his guitars with Post-it notes on which he'd written the names of the friends he wanted to inherit them after he was gone. He'd had to stop working at his day job, as an audio engineer, because he could no longer lift the equipment. Since he'd been sick, he'd gone greenish around the eyes and had lost a lot of weight. He'd chosen not to go on dialysis—he'd seen how his relatives had suffered on it, and he had a phobia of needles—and instead was treating himself with alternative remedies, chiefly a substance called IP6, made

SKETCHBOOK BY BARRY BLITT



"Apparently, fifty is the new unemployed."

• •

from rice bran. He cut out dairy. He slept nineteen times in a hyperbaric oxygen chamber.

Before Stephens came along, he had asked his friends to spread the word that he needed a donor, and, in the course of five years, sixteen people had come forward, but none had worked out. One wanted to sell him a kidney for a car. One offered but then discovered in testing that her kidneys were almost as bad as his. One was H.I.V.-positive, obese, and had tried to kill himself three months earlier; Randall rejected him on the ground that he was likely to fail the psychological exam. But Randall knew that he had to keep sounding positive, because in his world nobody wanted to talk to a sick guy: people loved a winner, and if he couldn't work and make money he was dead to them.

Stephens started to tell people about her plans to donate—her roommate, co-workers—and almost all of them had the same reaction: they wanted to know what the hell was wrong with her. Older women at work told her they would never permit their child to do such a thing. Her nurse at the blood-donation center (Stephens gives blood regularly) said she thought it was the craziest thing she'd ever heard. Even a person who had a relative waiting for a kidney transplant said that she would never let a child of her own donate. Stephens found these reactions disturbing. She understood that donating a kidney was not for everyone; some people couldn't handle the pain, or the loss of control—that she knew. But she found it harder to understand why people would think *she* was nuts. It seemed to her that she was simply helping someone in need, in the same way that she'd stop to help if someone had an accident on the road.

At a certain point, it occurred to her that the people who thought she was nuts might not, in fact, stop to help if they saw an accident on the road. But this was one of the reasons she had decided to give a kidney in the first place: to set an example for people like that. She believed that most people were selfish and materialistic, but that if they were reminded that others also had needs and wants, as important as their own, then maybe they would be a little less so. The petty selfishness of daily life drove her crazy and she wanted to fix it. She hated the way that, in the checkout line at Target, a person with a whole cartful of stuff would not let a person with only one or two things go ahead of him. She hated that, when she was driving and let a pedestrian cross the road, the driver behind her would honk in frustration. She always tried to do nice things for others. At work, she would often buy coffee for her co-workers without being asked, though mostly this just bewildered people.

Her parents didn't think she was nuts—they were proud of her. Stephens wrote on her blog, "i have always felt loved, cared for, secure, content, inspired and grateful for the family i was given . . . and i want to give back some of the love i've received (i almost want to cry writing this, haha)." Then she made her pitch. "where does backstabbing and climbing over each other to get to the top get us? it leaves us with angry and hurt people and only a few happy, greedy ones," she wrote. "i am helping in an extreme manner, but YOU can do things to help too. . . . volunteer. donate. give. love. and receive love back."

Just before the surgery, Stephens met Randall for the first time. He came up to her in the donation-center waiting room and nudged her. Stephens, caught by surprise, was paralyzed. "When I have a crush on somebody or—not to say I have a crush on him—but when I'm intimidated by somebody, I have a very hard time making eye contact," she says. "I could not look him in the eyes to save my life. It was just very—I don't know. It wasn't what I thought it was going to be at all. It was just uncomfortable." Randall also found the situation odd, though not unpleasant. "It's like meeting a mail-order bride," he says. "You're happy about it, but it's still unusual."

After the surgery, Stephens stayed in bed for days. Her mother took care of her. She was in pain, she was exhausted, but the worst part was that she never heard from Randall. She was devastated. She had given him so much, she was going through this pain for him, and he couldn't even say thank you? Her friends' sympathy just made her feel worse. "So many people said, 'It's like he got what he wanted and then left,'" she says sadly. She did a little research on him and found out that he was not as famous as she'd thought. "It made me look like an idiot, because I was telling people . . . he played for Led Zeppelin and Mick Jagger, and wrote songs for them, and he was, like, You're gonna be so famous," she says. "That's not what I wanted at all, but he really hooked me and then after he got my kidney—I don't know."

For weeks she stewed, angry and miserable. Finally, she blogged about how hurt she felt, and he called—he'd read what she'd written. He'd been in pain, he explained, and his sleeping had been out of whack, so he hadn't been able to phone. She thought that was a pretty weak excuse. He thanked her and said he was grateful, but he didn't, she felt, *really* thank her. More silence followed. She called several times and he didn't call back and finally she told herself that she was washing her hands of him. Sometime later, he sent her some photographs. "I get this e-mail from him that's like, 'Just got back from St. Maarten!' " she says. "So I was like, that asshole went to St. Maarten—the pictures are of him hanging on the beach, holding a drink, sunbathing—and he couldn't even pick up the phone to be like, I'm doing well, thank you? Now I wish I had kept my donation anonymous, because, fine, he gets the kidney, he goes to St. Maarten, has a good time, and I don't ever have to know about it. I guess it's like if somebody's cheating on you do you want to know or do you not want to know? It's the same feeling."

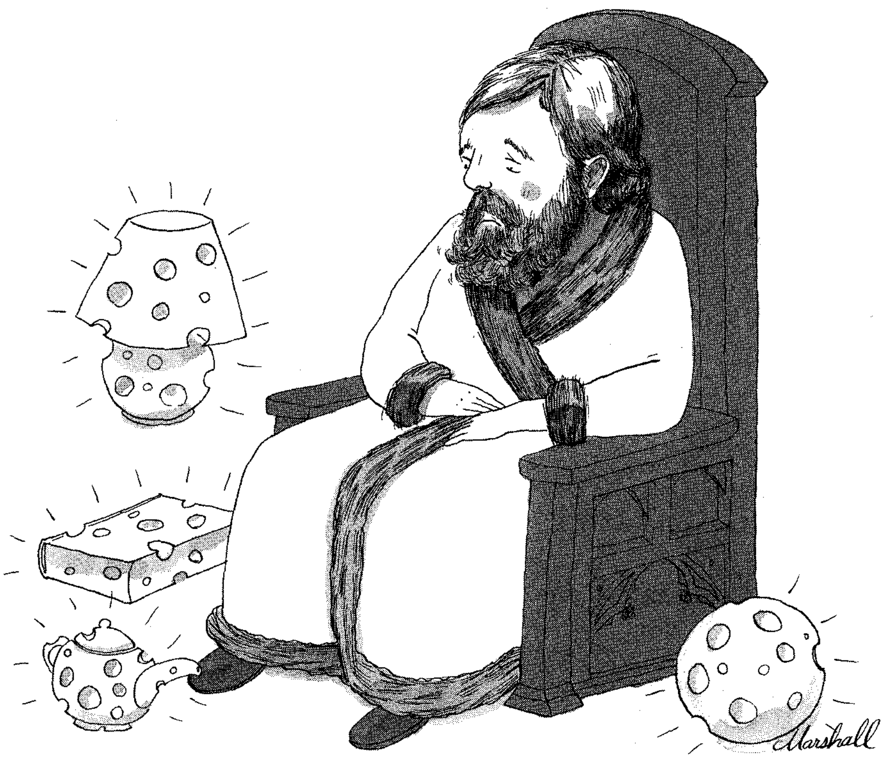
Right after the surgery, Randall felt as if every nerve in his body were screaming—he couldn't wear clothes, he was so uncomfortable. And he was taking lots of Vicodin, which made him feel like nothing. He didn't want to play music, he felt nothing for his girlfriend or his family. "I just wanted to be alone," he says. "It's like a dog goes into a closet to heal." Gradually, he started to feel better, and began to talk on the phone again. "A lot of my friends ask me, 'What's it feel like having a piece of a girl in you? Not just a stranger, but a *girl*.' I say, 'You know what? Every morning I wake up and I say, Hi Melissa, how are ya?' It's like having my best friend right near me. As far as I'm concerned, it's still hers. I just like to say, 'How you doin'? Everything good? You want something to drink?' A twenty-two-year-old girl, oh, I feel like the luckiest bastard in the world, I'll be honest with you."

Even now, a year later, Stephens finds the subject of Randall painful. "People think you're going to have this amazing connection that nobody else can have," she says. "But it's not like that. It's not like we fell in love. I mean, he tells me he loves me, but I can't even bring the words to my mouth to say it back, because I don't love him. This might sound crazy to other people, but if I were going to help somebody bring groceries to their car this is the same type of thing to me. I'm not going to love that person for helping them put groceries in their car." Still, she doesn't regret her donation. "It's a huge accomplishment," she says. "It's a big milestone in my life. I'm going to be able to tell this story forever and ever and ever."

Last December, five months after the surgery, she checked the counter on her blog and discovered that it had eighty-five hundred hits. She was thrilled, and decided to make another effort to inspire good. "i plan on volunteering some time at the local food pantry to help those in need this winter, and you should consider doing the same," she wrote. "although you may feel like (and very well may be) suffering somewhat, it is more than likely someone out there is having a harder time. so next time you're at the store and see the volunteer ringing the bell for the salvation army, drop in a dollar or two. . . . don't push and shove to get in front of one person while doing your gift shopping. . . . and thank god every night for the wonderful life you have. . . . happy holidays, melissa."

The waiting list for kidney transplants keeps getting longer, and more and more people die waiting. There are now about five hundred thousand Americans with end-stage renal disease, and about eighty-seven thousand die from it each year. A person's position on the waiting list is determined by a complex algorithm devised by UNOS that attempts to steer a middle ground between productivity and fairness. Should a kidney be given to the patient who will get the most years of life from it—the youngest, or the least sick? Should children be given priority, as they are now? Or should the list be strictly first-come, first-served, even though that would mean that organs would mostly go to the sickest patients, who might die soon even after a transplant?

The debate over fairness in organ allocation is haunted by kidney history. When the artificial kidney—the ancestor of the dialysis machine—first became able to sustain kidney patients for more than a few weeks, in the early nineteen-sixties, Seattle's Artificial Kidney Center, which owned the equipment, formed a committee to decide which of thousands of dying kidney patients would get to use it and live. The committee, which included a minister, a housewife, a banker, and a labor leader, determined the worthiness of the applicants by considering, among other factors, their church attendance, their marital status, and their net worth. This process, and similar ones at other



Midas Loses His Touch

MONJA BLANCA

The wild White Nun, rarest and loveliest
Of all her kind, takes form in the green shade
Deep in the forest. Streams of filtered light
Are tapped, distilled, and lavishly expressed
As petals. Her sweet hunger is displayed
By the labellum, set for bees in flight
To land on. In her well, the viscin gleams:
Mesmeric nectar, sticky stuff of dreams.

This orchid's sexual commerce is confined
To flowers of her own class, and nothing less.
And yet for humans she sends so sublime
A sensual signal that it melts the mind.
The hunters brave a poisoned wilderness
To capture just a few blooms at a time,
And even they, least sensitive of men,
Will stand to look, and sigh, and look again,

Dying of love for what does not love them.
Transported to the world, her wiles inspire
The same frustration in rich connoisseurs
Who pay the price for nourishing the stem
To keep the bloom fresh, as if their desire
To live forever lived again through hers:
But in a day she fades, though every fold
Be duplicated in fine shades of gold.

Only where she was born, and only for
One creature, will she give up everything
Simply because she is adored; and he
Must sacrifice himself. The Minotaur,

centers, became, not surprisingly, quite controversial. Some time later, a federal entitlement through Medicare was passed that secured access to dialysis for nearly everyone. The result of this has been that thousands of kidney patients who forty years ago would have died quickly now die slowly while waiting on the list.

There are those who feel that fairness is paramount, and they tend to oppose MatchingDonors because it charges for its services (although it waives the fee for those who can't afford it), and because it permits donors to bypass the UNOS list by picking their recipients. Douglas Hanto, the chief of transplantation at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, in Boston, for instance, feels that the system should work the same way for everybody—that there should be just one line to stand in. He concedes that it's possible that MatchingDonors draws in people who wouldn't otherwise donate—people who need the tug of a human story to sway them—thus making everybody better off, but, as long as its dating-service model favors the photogenic, the eloquent, and the computerized, he is against it. "We are all going to die," he says. "We have to do everything we can for our patients, but within the boundaries of moral principles. As much as we want to save everybody, we just can't."

Many people feel that it is a more elevated moral act to donate anonymously: not to pick a recipient, in other words, but simply to show up at a hospital and offer one's kidney, leaving it to the transplant center to assign it to the next person on the list. Sometimes the recipients in these transactions choose not to meet their donors; sometimes they don't even send a note to say thank you. For a donor to pick a recipient through a service like MatchingDonors can seem, from this perspective, like egotism—playing God by choosing who will live, and encouraging gratefulness by arranging for a relationship with the recipient. But, in a certain literal sense, a nondirected donation is not altruistic in the way that picking a recipient is, because there is no *other* there. There is no human story, just a principle; the only thing visible to the donor is his own shining deed.

In the kidney world, fierce debates take place over the best way to address the shortage of organs. The least controversial is to increase the number of people who register to donate after death. Some suggest that the United States adopt a "presumed consent" protocol for harvesting cadaver organs, as many countries in Europe have done. This would likely produce more kidneys, but, since only a small number of the dead possess organs healthy enough to work in a transplant, it would not solve the problem. Another way is to encourage donation from the living. If the safety of the surgery were better understood, perhaps more patients would ask their family and friends for help. Not everybody does—according to a recent study, fifty-four per cent don't ask anyone at all.

Asking for a kidney is a complicated business. It can be a matter of political sensibility. When the Catholic feminist activist Frances Kissling was told that she needed a kidney, she sent out an e-mail to a wide circle of friends describing her need. She decided that, although reliance on the generosity of others was new to her, it was not a bad thing—it was, she felt, of a piece with her feminism to turn to her community for help. ("I think of transplantation as something that brings us closer together as human beings," she says. "Sharing bodies is great, just as sex is great.") On the other hand, Sally Satel, a psychiatrist and author at the conservative American Enterprise Institute, didn't want to ask for help—she hated the thought of imposing, and of being beholden. Ideally, Satel would have liked to pay someone for a kidney: payment would, she felt, keep the transaction straightforward and reciprocal, leaving both parties free of entangling emotions. But, since payment was illegal, she turned to MatchingDonors.com, hoping to find a stranger, the next best thing. (As another kidney patient put it, "With family, there would be guilt trips," but from a

Ugly, exhausted, has no gifts to bring
Except his grief. She opens utterly
To show how she can match his tears of pain.
He drinks her in, and she him, like the rain.

He sees her, then, at her most beautiful,
And he would say so, could she give him speech:
But he must end his life there, near his prize,
Having been chosen, half man and half bull,
To find the heaven that we never reach
Though seeking it forever. Nothing buys
Or keeps a revelation that was meant
For eyes not ours and once seen is soon spent:

For all our sakes she should be left alone,
Guarded by legends of how men went mad
Merely from tasting her, of monsters who
Died from her kiss. May this forbidden zone
Be drawn for all time. If she ever had
A hope to live, it lies in what we do
To curb the longing she arouses. Let
Her be. We are not ready for her yet,

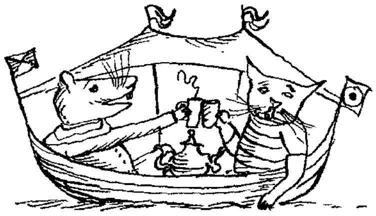
Because we have a mind to make her ours,
And she belongs to nobody's idea
Of the sublime but hers. But that we know,
Or would, if it were not among her powers
Always across the miles to bring us near
To where she thrives on shadows. By her glow
We measure darkness; by her splendor, all
That is to come, or gone beyond recall.

—*Clive James*

stranger "there's no attachments. At that point, it is just a slab of meat.")

Satel ended up accepting a kidney from an acquaintance who offered, the libertarian writer Virginia Postrel, but she remains dedicated to the cause of legalizing payment for organs. By this, she doesn't mean establishing an open market in which patients would pay cash to donors directly—even those who favor that approach realize that it would be, for reasons of cultural sensibility, unfeasible. Many people find the idea of paying cash for organs grotesque, although it is legal to pay cash to egg donors and, in some states, surrogate mothers, for their time, effort, and suffering. (The fuzzy line that separates organ-selling from these other practices is that it involves the removal of a body part, whereas the others leave the body more or less as it was, extracting only "tissue," and so can be thought of as labor for rent.) Instead, the idea would be to permit the government or insurance companies to compensate donors in some way: probably not in cash—so as not to risk exploiting the desperate—but in some more displaced and future-oriented form such as a health-insurance policy, a 401(k) contribution, or a college fund.

Kimberly Brown-Whale is a United Methodist pastor at a church in Essex, Maryland, a depressed town—pawnshops, storefront churches, bars—just east of Baltimore. She is fifty-three, bony and pale, with gray hair chopped at the chin and clipped tightly back on either side of her part. Her husband, Richard, is also a pastor, and they have spent about ten years abroad doing missionary work: they were posted twice to the Caribbean, to Anguilla and Grenada, and twice to Africa, first to Mozambique and then to Senegal. They own almost nothing, because when they go overseas the church doesn't ship anything and they have nowhere to keep their stuff, so each time they give everything they've acquired to people they know, or to thrift stores. The Brown-Whales have three children. They adopted their eldest and their youngest, Sarah and Cassie, from foster care as babies—Sarah in Maryland, and Cassie in Grenada. They also have a biological son, Peter. They didn't plan to have a family that way; that was just how it worked out.



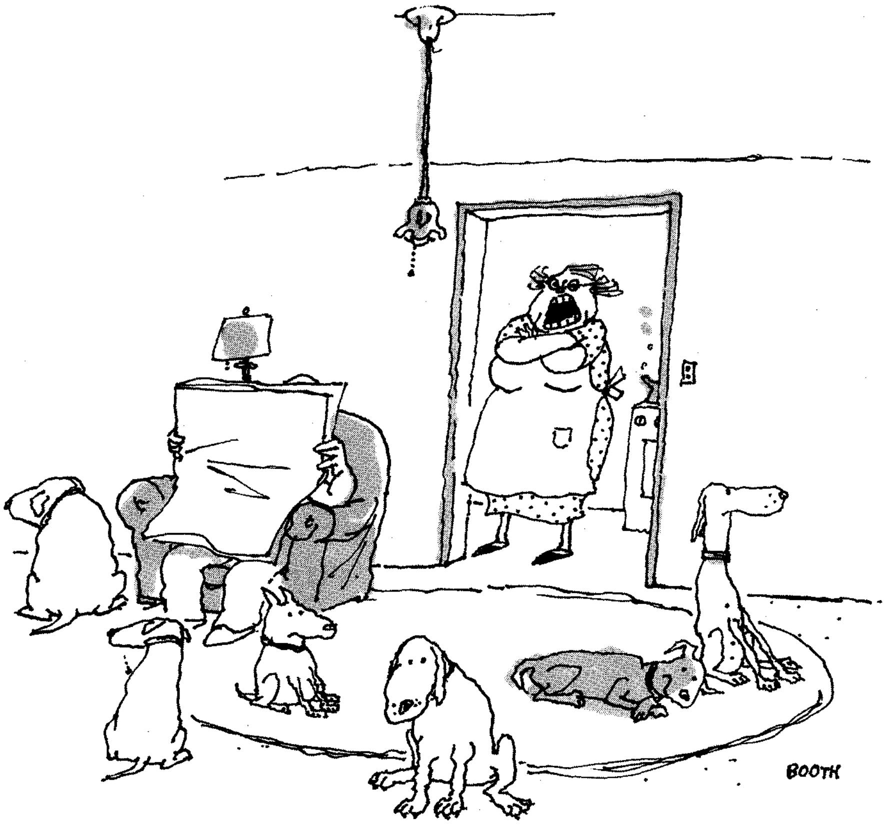
They volunteered as missionaries because they wanted to expand their horizons, but the work was difficult. In Senegal, they were posted to a remote area where there wasn't much food, and sometimes they were too hungry to sleep. Often, people couldn't understand what they were doing there, and suspected ulterior motives: people saw that their daughters were not their biological children and suspected that they'd kidnapped young Africans to be their servants. Shortly after they arrived in Mozambique, Richard Brown-Whale was attacked on the street—robbed and choked and left for dead. Then they discovered that Peter had a heart condition. Shortly after that, they were attacked by a mob that was convinced they'd kidnapped their younger daughter and tried to snatch her away. After that, the family went home for a bit, but they decided to return to finish their stint. Kimberly Brown-Whale's parents begged them not to go back, and even some in the church said that they should stay home, but they felt that going back was the right thing to do. "Life is risky," she says. "You can get attacked at home just as easily as you can get attacked anywhere else. You can get sick at home as easy as you can get sick anywhere else. We had made a promise and we wanted to keep the promise. We were doing good work and we wanted to see it out."

Brown-Whale didn't grow up in a religious home. Her father, an aerospace engineer, always told her she was a Pollyanna, naïvely believing that people were good and things would work out for the best, but she liked that about herself. When she was working abroad, she worried that it would harden her heart—that she'd grow used to the misery around her, having continually to turn away from people tugging at her clothes—but she believes she's still the same Pollyanna she always was. If someone does something cruel, she won't dislike him: she'll say that what he did doesn't make sense to her, or that there must be more to the situation than she knows about; or she'll come up with some convoluted explanation that makes the person's behavior look reasonable. She is not a dispassionate judge—when one of her parishioners is hurt she gets very emotional. "I think empathy is a good thing," she says. "Not all of my colleagues would agree. But when someone tells me something and it hurts so much that it makes me cry, I don't think that makes me any less effective as a pastor. I think the more you care the more people are willing to hear what you have to offer. I tell them, 'Because I love you,' and I do."

Last year, she saw an item on the TV news about a local woman who needed a kidney, and she immediately called the hospital, Johns Hopkins, to offer herself as a donor. Testing established that she was a terrible match for the woman, but the transplant nurse asked her if she'd be willing to donate to someone else, and she said she would. The nurse asked if she needed to know who the recipient was and she said she didn't, she trusted the hospital to pick the person who needed it most. She thought it would be neat if she could meet the person afterward, but, if the person didn't want to, that would be fine, too.

Part of what appealed to her about donating a kidney was the concreteness of it: she knew that she was helping someone, and she knew exactly how. She thought of herself as being in the helping business, but so much of her work was just talk, talk, talk—her Sunday sermons, funerals, visiting parishioners in the hospital—that she often wondered whether anything she did made any difference. It was difficult to help. When she got home, there were always people sitting on her front steps waiting for her, and if she didn't know a person she worried that if she gave him money he'd spend it on drink or drugs, or that he'd become dependent on her. She knew that people sometimes lied to her about what they needed, and that always left her feeling compromised. And then things would go wrong. Like the time she asked seventy kids in a shelter what they wanted for Christmas, and parishioners spent a lot of money buying them those things, and then the presents were stolen.

The morning of her surgery, Brown-Whale sneaked out of the house at dawn, leaving Cassie and her husband sleeping. They'd wanted to come with her, but they'd had a long drive the day before, so she decided not to wake them. She wasn't nervous. She'd spent the weekend coping with her elderly father, who had been visiting, and, what with constantly worrying about him injuring himself in her house and then chaperoning him on the plane back home, she hadn't given the surgery much thought. Insofar as it had crossed her mind, the idea of accomplishing something while asleep, followed by several days of enforced passivity, had seemed rather attractive.



"Close-order drill! Everybody fall in!"

She lay on her back on the operating table, unconscious and lightly breathing. Her pelvis and legs were hidden under sheets; her face and chest, screened off by another sheet, were visible only to the anesthesiologist; her bare midsection was exposed. Four small incisions were cut in her skin—blood prickling up at the scalpel's edge—and a fifth, lower down, just above her pubis, slightly longer, about three inches. Into this last was threaded a tiny camera on a stem; an image of her viscera—gleaming, bulging, bloody—appeared on a screen above the table, brightly visible in the dark room. A retractor was inserted into a second incision, to push her liver out of the way. Into a third went the scissors, into a fourth the graspers (tweezers). Holding the graspers, the surgeon—Robert Montgomery, chief of transplantation, his handlebar mustache, which extends almost to his clavicle, tied up in an elastic band—tugged gently at the fat under her skin, and at the connective tissue, the taut, thin membrane holding her insides in place, separating off a tiny piece for his scissors to snip. The graspers tugged, the scissors snipped, tug, snip, tug, snip, carefully, slowly, inexorably, cutting a path down through the layers of flesh. Tiny puffs of steam emerged from an incision as the flesh was cauterized.

A piece of membrane was tugged aside and a pulsing red vessel was revealed—the renal artery. Then another, bigger vessel, dark purple, the inferior vena cava, the largest vein in the body, carrying blood from the lower body back to the heart. Coming off the vena cava at a right angle was the renal vein. Tug, snip, tug, snip. The adrenal gland—small, yellowish, attached to the top of the kidney. The surgeon stapled the adrenal vein and gently separated—tug, snip, tug, snip—the gland, which would stay with her. At last, the kidney itself, pink and turgid. The surgeon paused. The anesthesiologist noticed.

"What's going on?"

"Unclear right now. There's some artery here I didn't anticipate."

Montgomery left his instruments and turned to inspect the X-ray of Brown-Whale's kidneys. It was usual to extract a donor's left kidney, but since he'd discovered in a scan that her left had three arteries going into it instead of the normal one, they'd decided to take out the right instead. So what was this second renal artery he'd just come across? He peered at the X-ray but could see no sign of it. He returned to his instruments. It would not be a problem; it would just make the surgery a little more complicated.

Gently, he separated the ureter from the kidney, then clamped and cut it. With the ureter closed, there came the moment to cut the renal artery, the most delicate part of the surgery.

"Can we turn the music down and everyone shut up, thank you."

Everyone went quiet and watched the screen. Montgomery stapled the artery closed. He cut the artery, paused—no bleeding, no leaks. Then he did the same to the renal vein. He reached into her with a tube containing a clear plastic bag, then lifted the kidney up in his palm. "Look how small it is!" people murmured. He thrust it into a bowl of fluid. He connected the cut-off artery to an I.V. drip so the fluid flushed through the kidney's vessels and washed it out. (Filled with blood, it would degenerate.) As the blood left the organ, it turned pale, and the liquid in the bowl grew darker. The kidney flushed, Montgomery wrapped it in liquid inside three plastic bags. He placed it on ice inside a cooler, and a nurse took it away.

Two hours later, the recipient, a middle-aged man from Rhode Island, lay on the operating table, being prepped. The hair on his stomach was shaved off, and loose hairs removed with sticky tape. His stomach was large.

"He's a little chubby," Montgomery said, looking at it. More flesh to get through.

Another surgeon stopped by.

"How'd that right go, Bob?" he asked, about taking out Brown-Whale's right kidney rather than her left.

"It was awkward. Like dancing with a man."

The surgeon cut a long incision in the stomach, about seven inches diagonally downward from just below the navel. He would put the new kidney not where kidneys usually were, but lower. (It's not necessary to remove old kidneys, so a person who's had a few transplants might have four or five inside.)

"Do we have some music?" Montgomery asked. "I don't want to hear Nirvana again. Put Dave Matthews on."

Into the man's belly went the cauterizer, cutting through the yellow glistening fat, through the thin white fascia, then into the dark-red abdominal muscle. Montgomery held the parted flesh open while another surgeon pressed the cauterizer down into it. A white towel soaked up the blood. The room smelled of burning fat. Once far enough down into the man, they clamped the incision wide open with metal retractors and went to work on the abdominal vessels, cleaning, isolating, clamping.

"What the hell vessel is that?" Montgomery murmured.

"Don't know," the other surgeon said.

One of the man's iliac veins was enormous.

"Whoa, doozy," Montgomery said. "Can we get the kidney up?"

Montgomery carried the kidney from the cooler in its plastic bag. The bag was filled with bright-red blood; the kidney was bloodless and putty-colored. It looked dead.

Montgomery reached into the man's cavity, clamped the receiving vein, and cut.

"Everybody remember we haven't clamped the artery yet," he said. "O.K., knife."

Montgomery held the kidney's renal vein open with two graspers while the other surgeon sewed it to the receiving vein in the body of the man. The kidney's vein was very thin; it was difficult to sew. Then it was time to clamp and attach the artery; Montgomery sewed the man's artery to the kidney's. When he was sure there would be no leaks, he released the clamp, and in one second, two seconds, three seconds, the putty-colored kidney expanded with the man's blood flowing into it and turned pink.

"Isn't that beautiful," Montgomery said happily. He felt it gently with his fingers. "How's that blood pressure?"

"One-twenty-one over sixty-five."

"Can we have bladder irrigation, please?"

The man hadn't peed in ten years. His bladder had shrunk to the size of a walnut. Now he was going to have to pee constantly.

Montgomery held up the end of the ureter coming from the kidney and it squirted out its first little drop of urine.

"Look at that!" he cried.

Kimberly Brown-Whale never heard from the man who got her kidney. Other than his name, she doesn't know a thing about him. She asked the transplant nurse if he was doing O.K. and was told that he was, but that was it. Her own recovery was uneventful. She refused to use the morphine drip in the hospital (she claimed she kept losing the button, though it was attached to her bed), so the nurses sent her home with Tylenol, which she didn't use, either. The transplant center gave her a potted plant as a thank-you. She was back at work within a week.

Most people who donate their kidneys to strangers say it's not for everyone, but Kimberly Brown-Whale disagrees. "I don't see why not," she says. "People used to say the same thing about the mission field: 'I could never do what you do.' Well, why not? You pack up some stuff and you go. Give it a try. We can do more than we think we can. If you're sitting around with a good kidney you're not using, why can't someone else have it? For a couple of days of discomfort, someone else is going to be freed from dialysis and be able to live a full life. Gosh, I've had flus that made me feel worse." ♦

NEWYORKER.COM
An audio interview with Larissa MacFarquhar.

PROFILES

RENAISSANCE MAN

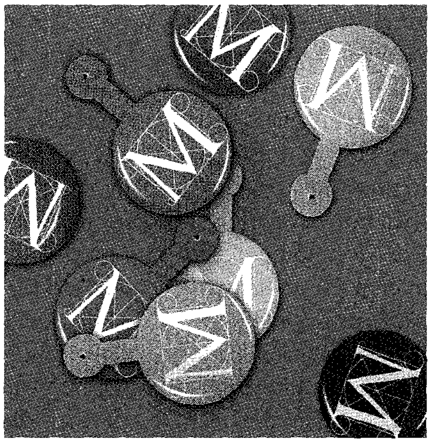
The Met's new director.

BY REBECCA MEAD

Philippe de Montebello, who retired as the director of the Metropolitan Museum at the end of last year, after thirty-one years in the position, was known for his fluency in five languages, his effortless hauteur, and his conviction that the Met should not be embarrassed by its status as an élite institution. He inhabited his role as the museum's leader so entirely that he, like it, came to seem larger than life. "I am the Met, and the Met is me," he told an interviewer a few years before his abdication, having been compared to Louis XIV by a sufficient number of commentators to internalize the formulation.

The new director of the Met, Thomas Campbell—an expert in Renaissance tapestries, who was previously a curator of European sculpture and decorative arts—is, by comparison, somewhat smaller than life. Slight of build and modest of demeanor, he has an open, attractive face, and brown hair that is flecked with gray. He is forty-eight years old and irredeemably English, and although he no longer resembles the choirboy he once was, it is easy to imagine him, say, holding forth about Cardinal Wolsey before a classroom of schoolboys in ties and blazers. As a curator, he was known for a certain donnish flamboyance—he favored red or yellow corduroy trousers—but as director he has adopted a uniform of gray and blue suits, in which he looks somewhat uncomfortable. Campbell, whose appointment was announced last September, does not exude grandeur. A video that was posted on the museum's Web site earlier this year showed him standing on the balcony overlooking the Great Hall, issuing a scripted greeting to Internet users. His awkward gestures and embarrassed smile were those of a committee chairman drafted to deliver an after-dinner address when the expected celebrity speaker is stuck in a holding pattern above LaGuardia.

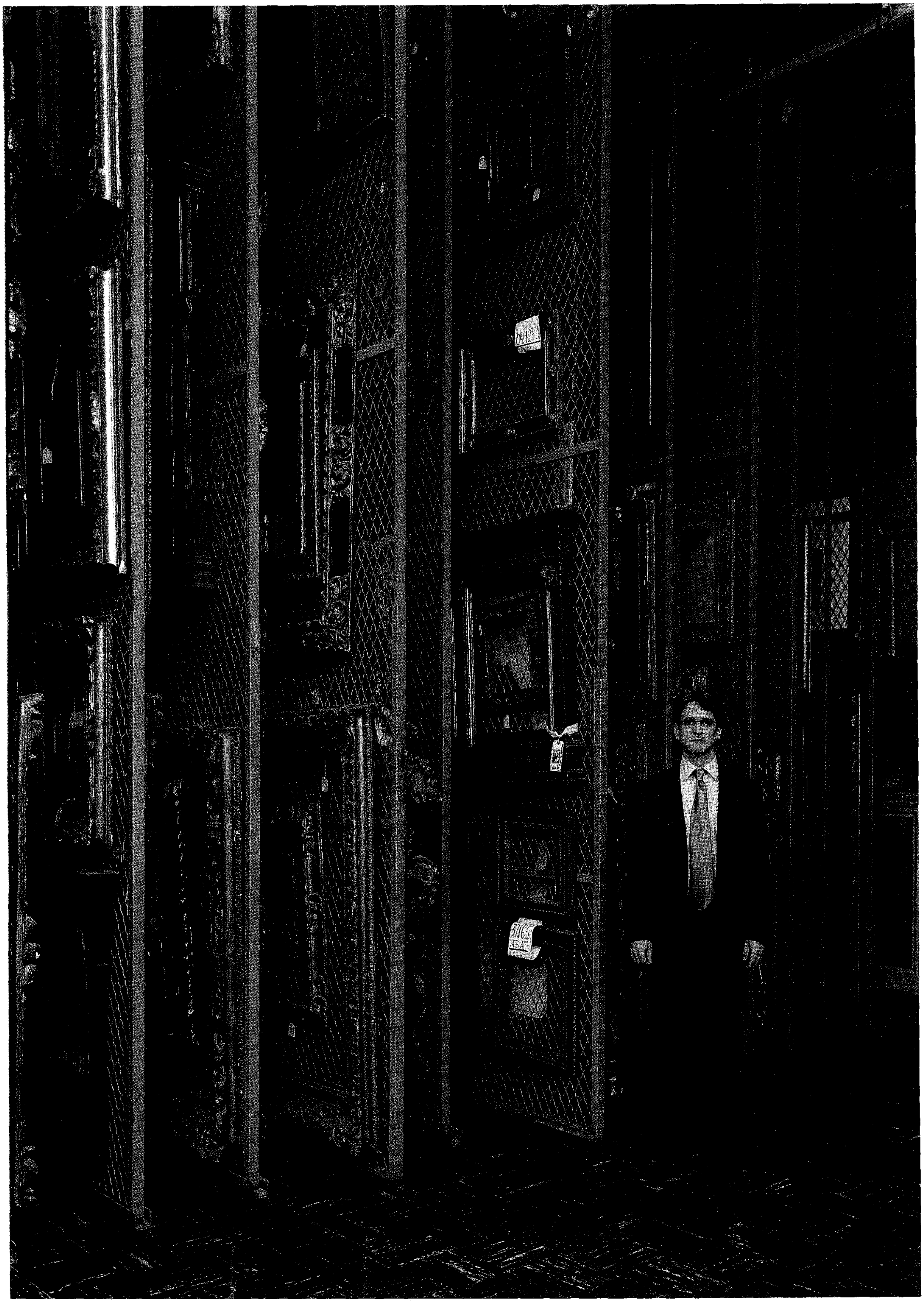
During the nine months between de Montebello's announcement of his retirement and the nomination of Campbell, many names surfaced in the press as possible new directors, including that of James Cuno, the head of the Art Institute of Chicago; Glenn Lowry, of the Museum of Modern Art; and Neil MacGregor, the extremely popular head of the British Museum, who is said to have withdrawn from the contest in favor of remaining at a public institution. On the short list of the museum's search committee were two others at the Met: Gary Tinterow, the chairman of the Department of Nineteenth-Century, Modern, and Contemporary Art; and Ian Wardropper, who, as the chairman of the Department of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts, is Campbell's former boss. Within the museum, both men had loomed larger than Campbell: they had each served as chair of the Forum of Curators, Conservators, and Scientists, and both were on the Director's Council, de Montebello's inner circle of advisers. In recent years, at the request of James Houghton, the chairman of the board of trustees, de Montebello had placed in a sealed envelope the names of people he thought capable of succeeding him, to be opened if he were felled by misfortune. De Montebello now says that he can't recall whether Campbell's name was ever on the list, but "doubts" that it was.



Wardropper says of the choice, "I think it startled a few people—he is known as Tapestry Tom, as someone who knows an area better than anyone else in the world but was less known for breadth across an institution." George Goldner, the Drue Heinz Chairman of the Department of Drawings and Prints, says, "Tom had many of the advantages of an insider, and many of the advantages of an outsider. He was never part of the old Met establishment—he wasn't one of the half dozen curators that Philippe consulted with frequently. So I think he has a degree of objectivity." Campbell was also distinguished from his in-house competitors by his relative youth: Tinterow is fifty-five, Wardropper fifty-eight.

In fourteen years at the Met, Campbell had been admired for his scholarship: two years ago, he published a book in which he reimagined the magnificent tapestry collection of Henry VIII, which is now almost entirely destroyed or dispersed. (So is much of the output of the tapestry workshops of Brussels, Paris, and elsewhere, the art form having fallen out of favor in the eighteenth century. During the French Revolution, many tapestries were burned to ash for the gold or silver they contained.) Campbell was also known for orchestrating two ambitious exhibitions of tapestries, the first that the museum had presented in decades. "Tapestry in the Renaissance: Art and Magnificence," which opened in 2002, gathered forty-five works that had been woven, at great expense, for the rulers of Europe, and which depicted mythological, historical, or Biblical scenes, often specifically chosen to aggrandize their powerful owners. The visual effect in the Met's darkened galleries of the ornate tapestries, many of which hadn't travelled for more than two hundred years, was overwhelming. (So was the historical context: a set of tapestries, designed by Raphael and commissioned for the Sistine Chapel, cost more than five times as much as Michelangelo's fee for the ceiling; Henry VIII spent on a single

SILJA GÖTZ



Thomas Campbell, known as Tapestry Tom at the museum, in the European Paintings office. Photograph by Jason Schmidt.

"We've been married for twenty-five years. Perhaps we should remove the last remaining can."

tapestry the equivalent of the price of a battleship.) The show attracted two hundred and fifteen thousand visitors, more than twice as many as the museum had projected, and was praised by critics as a revelatory opportunity to experience sixteenth-century consumption at its most conspicuous. A follow-up exhibit, "Tapestry in the Baroque: Threads of Splendor," which opened in 2007, drew similar critical raves, if smaller crowds.

These successes were a vindication for Campbell, who had encountered internal hesitancy—including from de Montebello—over the idea of mounting such a lavish exposition of an art form typically relegated to the margins. Even with these curatorial triumphs, however, Campbell did not strike anyone as a director in the making. Rumors of his potential nomination began to be whispered in the museum last summer, when Campbell started closing the usually open door to his windowless office on the mezzanine of the Kravis Wing. But his appointment was still greeted with widespread surprise, if also to general approbation. "It was a surprise, but a pleasant surprise," de Montebello told me. "He's solidly grounded, not an ivory-tower academic. He is extremely personable, he is very open, he is very articulate, and there is a degree of toughness in him that I think will come in handy."

Perhaps nobody was more surprised by the appointment than Campbell, who says that he would have been happy to continue indefinitely as a curator at the Met—despite the occasional urging of his wife, Phoebe Campbell, that he seek a bigger job at a smaller institution in the Midwest, where she is from. (Phoebe runs a brand-licensing agency. They have two school-age children, and have been living in Westchester County.) When Campbell was first drawn into the search process, he was about to leave for England to begin research on a book about the rise and fall of tapestries in Britain. After a summer of interviews with trustees, he received a call asking him to go to the Colony Club, on Park Avenue. "I had to wait awhile, and I was thinking, Goodness knows what skeletons have come out of the closet," he told me. "Then I went in, and the whole search committee was there, with Emily Rafferty, the president of the museum, and they said, 'We have one more question to ask you: Do you still want to be the director?' "

Campbell had understandable misgivings about surrendering his academic interests: on becoming a candidate, he spoke to George Goldner about finding time to write the book he was planning. "You should probably think more about this job, if that's what you're imagining," Goldner advised. But since his official takeover Campbell has found some satisfaction in assuming a new identity. "People need leadership, and, if you hang about worrying about whether or not you can give leadership, you are just wasting everybody's time," he told me in early April, just three months into the job. "There is definitely an aspect of 'the King is dead, long live the King.' I inherit a mantle, or an aura, and much of the time it is as if people use patterns of thought and mannerisms that were established over a long period of time, with Philippe." Despite his fluent recourse to regal metaphor, and despite the monarchical affectations of his predecessor, there is, he says, no reign that provides a model for his own tenure. "There haven't been very many wise kings, have there?" he said. "Those who come to mind have many limitations. So, no, I am not modelling myself on Henry VIII, or Louis XIV—or George III. Or Queen Victoria. Or Queen Elizabeth."

Campbell's job has not turned out to be the one that he thought he was pursuing. His appointment was announced a week before the failure of Lehman Brothers and the subsequent collapse of the financial markets, and his days have been dominated by a crisis not of his own making. (Inevitably, he has found himself compared to President Obama. "At least I don't also have to fight two wars," he told Daniëlle Kisluk-Grosheide, a Met curator.) Last July, the Met's endowment was $2.8 billion; it has since shrunk by a third. The museum draws upon its endowment, as it is averaged out over five years, for a third of its operating costs; while this year's total will be buoyed by investment income earned before the crash, the outlook for the next several years is bleak. James Houghton told me, "I said to Tom, 'Timing is everything, and you joined at just the wrong time.' "

Revenues from other sources also have diminished. Just before the crisis, visitors, of whom there were 4.7 million in the past fiscal year, paid an average of ten dollars and fifty cents for admission. (The "suggested donation" is twenty dollars.) Emily Rafferty told me in March that the average contribution was now closer to nine dollars and ninety cents. Less money is available from New York City, too. The museum is on city-owned land and receives municipal support to cover a portion of its utilities and security costs—twenty-seven million dollars in the past fiscal year. In a letter to museum members in February, Houghton noted that the city's donation would be $1.7 million less for fiscal 2009, with the possibility of further reductions the next year.

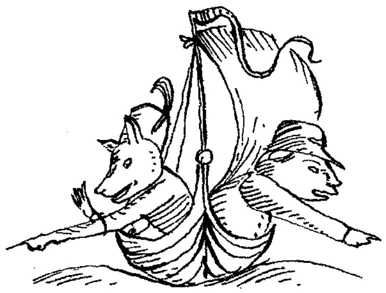
Donations from wealthy patrons and corporations, which last year totalled thirty-six million dollars, are also down. "We continue to get seven-figure gifts, but the rate has slowed," says John Rosenwald, a trustee emeritus who has headed the Fund for the Met campaign since 1994, during which time it has raised $1.1 billion, about half of it from the pockets of board members. "Thank God we raised the billion-one when we did," Rosenwald says. In his fund-raising pitch, he says, he now asks potential donors to consider giving unrestricted funds to pay for immediate operating costs, rather than gifts earmarked for a more glamorous purpose, such as the endowment of a chair.

Campbell wants the museum's economizing to be nearly invisible to its visitors: there are no plans to reduce operating hours, as occurred during a downturn in 1972. The Galleries for Islamic Art, which have been closed for renovation, are still scheduled to reopen in 2011. Campbell plans to reduce the number of special exhibitions—there have been thirty to thirty-five a year—but claims that the general public won't notice the difference. No shows that have already been scheduled will be cancelled, though some have been delayed. "It is not a question of going in there with a weed whacker," he says. "It is more a question of careful pruning and spreading things out." (The grand floral displays in the Great Hall can't be sacrificed to save money, however: they are endowed in perpetuity, with a $1.1-million gift from the Wallace Foundation.)

But within the institution an atmosphere of cost-cutting is palpable. Some curators who regularly flew to Europe to keep current are now volunteering to buy their own plane tickets and staying with friends. Catering expenditures have been reduced. Barbara Fleischman, the chairman of the visiting committee of the Department of American Paintings and Sculpture, and whose late husband, Lawrence Fleischman, endowed the chair of the American Wing, told me about a fund-raising lunch that was held for the ongoing renovation of the galleries. "We sat at tables with no real tablecloths, and there were these tins—like workers' lunch pails—each containing a sandwich and a cookie and a fruit cup," she recalled. "It was darling."

The most significant cuts have been in personnel. Since January, the museum's payroll has been reduced by three hundred and fifty-seven, to fewer than twenty-two hundred employees. "The Met has a tradition of exceptionalism," Goldner says. "So people had read in the papers that the financial world was in distress, but somehow it never occurred to them that it would affect the Met."

Campbell told me, with evident pain, "There are people here who thought they would die in their offices." We spoke on a warm evening in April, at the opening of "Roxy Paine on the Roof: Maelstrom," a tangled network of welded stainless-steel pipes, suggestive of tree branches and neural pathways, which has been installed for the summer in the Met's roof garden. As the fading pink sunlight glinted off the twisting steel limbs, Campbell hovered at one end of the roof garden, far from the elevators bringing guests upstairs. He was flanked by Nina Diefenbach, his head of development, and a press representative, who cued him with names of approaching well-wishers. Campbell repeatedly shook hands and smiled, then retreated to his circle of familiar faces. He is often required to spend evenings in the company of new friends; he recently joined Jayne Wrightsman, a trustee emeritus, in her box at the Metropolitan Opera for a performance of "Don Giovanni." (It was the longest he's gone without using his BlackBerry in months.)



"I never see him anymore," Phoebe Campbell said of her husband, as he was whisked off to shake another hand. "I see him at dinners. I feel like we're dating." They'll see more of each other, she added, when the family moves into a museum-owned apartment, on Fifth Avenue. "We're on the second floor," she said. "So we can see into the galleries. And they can see us."

When Campbell stepped back for a moment of respite, he covetously eyed a glass in the hand of Roxy Paine, who was standing nearby. The bar was downstairs, in the Petrie Court, and the artist was apparently the only person who had smuggled a beverage onto the roof. "I wish I still had my wine," Campbell complained, with a comical, peevish note in his voice, as if some higher authority than himself could be blamed.

There have been only nine directors of the Metropolitan Museum since it was founded, in 1870, including one other from the United Kingdom, Sir Caspar Purdon Clarke, the Met's second director. (He took over in 1905 from Luigi Palma di Cesnola, a former military man who stuffed the new museum's halls with antiquities that are now widely regarded to have been looted.) Purdon Clarke had been the director of the South Kensington Museum, in London, and the trustees felt it necessary to apologize for his nationality in their report recommending him to the museum's board. "In appearance and manner he is more American than English," the report read. "He is thoroughly democratic and approachable."

The qualities of democracy and approachability have always been part of the Met's stated mission: it was founded upon a belief that "the diffusion of a knowledge of art in its higher forms of beauty would tend directly to humanize, to educate and refine a practical and laborious people," as Joseph C. Choate, a founding trustee, put it in March, 1880, at the institution's formal dedication. In fact, in its early years the actual presence of practical and laborious people in the museum's halls was not always encouraged by the trustees: it did not open on Sundays, the only day that most working people could actually visit, until more than a decade after it began operating. When it did finally open on Sunday, in May, 1891, the Boston *Herald* described a crowd that sounds already thoroughly humanized: "A good part of it brought big baskets of lunch, but was not a bit disturbed that the baskets could not pass the turnstiles."

In recent decades, however, a principal concern of the Met's directors has been encouraging more visitors to come to the museum, and to make return visits. Campbell says, "The model that museums collected objects, and presented them, and the public came and were inspired and informed—the late-nineteenth-century model—is obviously a very dated one." Increasingly, the Met's visitors are little versed in the history of European art—the reigning priority at the museum—in part because more and more foreign visitors come from countries other than European ones. The Met, he says, nonetheless tends to make untenable assumptions about the depth of visitors' knowledge. "If you are not familiar with the European tradition of painting, there is no explanation for why Rembrandt is considered to be such a great painter," he told me.

Campbell's own education equipped him with an ample appreciation of Rembrandt: he was sent away to prep school at the age of nine, then attended a private school in Cambridge, where his father owned a company that traded and processed plastics. He got his undergraduate degree, in English, from Oxford, and went on to take an art-history course at Christie's.

Campbell did his graduate work at the Courtauld Institute, in London. While studying patronage in Britain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, he became attuned to the neglected medium of tapestries. "This is when so many of the great country houses were being built, and the subject was taught very much in terms of architecture, because there was not a lot of indigenous painting or sculpture of great quality," he says. "The implicit message coming across was that Britain was this backwater, because there was no great painting, and that just struck me as odd. And it suddenly hit me that the reason people weren't spending a lot of money on paintings was that what they cared about was tapestry."

Campbell was inspired by the splendor of the objects—"I was just blown away, they are so beautiful," he says—and by the prospect of filling in a scholarly gap. "There was the Courtauld, full of books about art, and yet all of the books about tapestry could be fit onto three shelves down in the basement next to the boiler, and they had all been written in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and the vast majority were in German and Flemish and Italian," he says. "The minute that you start looking at the context—in which Holbein was paid five pounds for a painting whereas Henry VIII, at the same time, spent a thousand pounds for a set of tapestries—that starts begging questions."

Having completed his master's degree at the Courtauld, in 1987, Campbell made an unorthodox move. "I realized that what was needed to promote this field was an image database," Campbell says. "I tried to persuade the Victoria & Albert Museum and the Courtauld to take me on, but there was no money. But I had met the leading tapestry dealers, David and Simon Franses"—a father-and-son team—"and they asked me to work for them, as a researcher." He spent seven years in a back room of the Franseses' gallery, on Jermyn Street, amassing an archive of European tapestries held by museums and in private collections—"a kind of glorified stamp collecting," he says. "He was very focussed," Simon Franses says. "He would never go out to lunch. He built up this amazing network of contacts."

He also made some remarkable discoveries. At the request of a Courtauld classmate, Simon Thurley, who had gone on to run Hampton Court, the former royal palace in Richmond upon Thames, Campbell took a close look at the records of tapestries that had originally hung in the state apartments. "He identified a couple of tapestries that were rolled up in storage that nobody had seen for a hundred years," Thurley, who is now the head of English Heritage, says. "We stood by as these tapestries were unrolled, out on the car park, and it was completely and utterly astonishing." Other discoveries were more whimsical: while sifting through documents at the British Public Records Office, Campbell determined that George III, during whose reign many of the great British tapestries disappeared, had invented an implement for extracting valuable gold and silver thread from within the weave. "On a rainy afternoon, he must have been sitting there, happily unstitching the thread," Campbell says.

Richard Bridges, a friend from Oxford with whom Campbell shared a flat in London, says that Campbell became increasingly committed to his career. "I remember him standing at a bus stop, maybe in 1986, and gazing up wistfully at an apartment building near South Kensington which he had the idea belonged to Roy Strong"—then the head of the Victoria & Albert Museum—"and he said, 'I'd like to live in a place like that. I'd like to be Roy Strong.' " But in Britain all the prominent positions for textile curators were taken by people who weren't likely to retire for decades. "It was a great source of frustration," Simon Thurley says.

In 1994, Campbell moved to New York to join the Met. (He knew the city somewhat, having lived there for several months before enrolling at the Courtauld. He'd been a waiter at Odeon—"the lunch shift.") He became the first supervising curator of the Antonio Ratti Textile Center, a repository of textiles, for which he created the museum's first computerized image database. Within a few years, he began planning his début show on Renaissance tapestries.

The contacts he had made while at the Franses gallery were invaluable, as were his diplomatic skills. "I received a call one day from a Mr. Thomas Campbell," Barbara Fleischman says. Her late husband, a dealer and collector of art, had consulted with Pope Paul VI about the Vatican's collection of twentieth-century spiritual art. "Tom said, 'I wonder if you can help me. I understand that you and your husband have connections at the Vatican.' And I said, 'Why, yes, we do.' He said, 'I am doing this Renaissance-tapestry exhibition, and I have requested four great tapestries from the Vatican Museum, and they are straight-arming me. Is there any way you can help?' And I said, 'Well, Mr. Campbell, this really is a coincidence. In ten days' time, I am going to Rome.' " The Vatican ended up lending three of the four tapestries that Campbell sought. From the British Royal Collection, Campbell borrowed one of the Abraham tapestries, a series of six originally made for Henry VIII; the last commoner to get even temporary possession of the tapestries was Oliver Cromwell. After the show opened, in

March, 2002, Jed Perl, of *The New Republic*, wrote that the impact of seeing such works together was "a bit like seeing the full version of Abel Gance's 'Napoleon' or D. W. Griffith's 'Intolerance' on a large screen after knowing silent movies from clips on television."

One of Campbell's qualifications for running the Met, he believes, is this firsthand experience of bringing to public attention an overlooked medium. "I have spent my career studying and championing a subject that has been marginalized in modern studies, so I am perfectly comfortable with the sense that the canon of modern taste is not perfect," he says. "I am not bringing a narrow-minded focus on Italian sixteenth-century painting being the pinnacle of it all, and I hope that I am going to be able to really support all the different treasures that we hold from around the world."

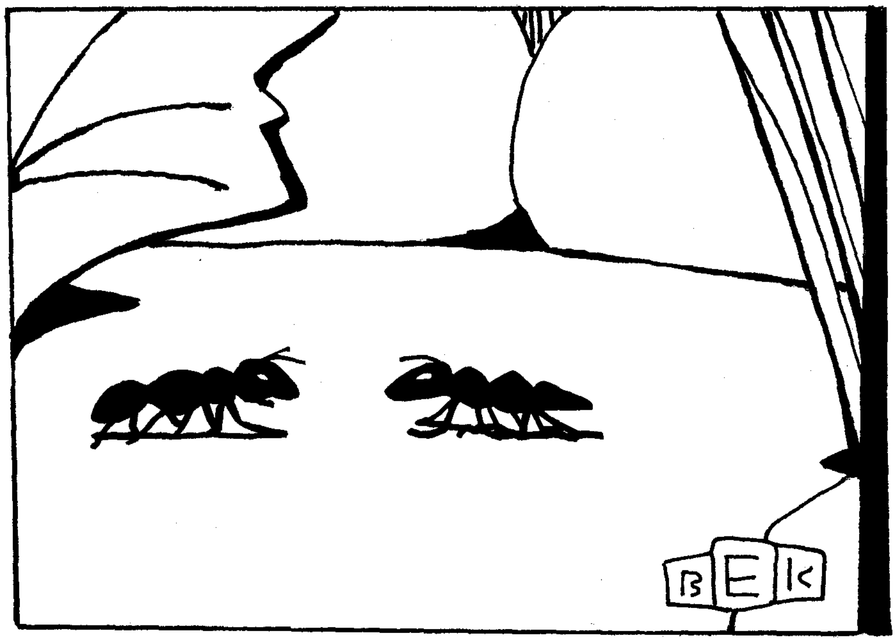
If there is something comical in the notion of a tweedy Englishman as a representative of the subaltern, Campbell takes the responsibility of embracing the museum's encyclopedic nature in great earnest. "Whether it's the grandeur of the Assyrian Reliefs room we have right above the end of the Great Hall, or the Temple of Dendur, or the dugout canoe we have in our Arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas galleries—the second you start imagining what they were originally made for, what went on around them, it's exciting," he says. "You can practically hear the sound of skin drums, or human sacrifices, or see the *studiolo* of a Renaissance connoisseur." He declines to identify a favorite work in the museum, saying it would be invidious to choose; but, when pressed, he confesses to a particular fondness for "The Harvesters," by Pieter Bruegel the Elder. "It's a timeless image, an affectionate but critical eye on humanity," he says.

One day, Campbell took me on a quick tour of the sort that he has often been called upon to give since his appointment, and made a point of being as eclectic as time allowed. "An old girlfriend was visiting from Germany the other day, and she said, 'You have to give me the Lecture,'" he said, apologetically, as he darted through the newly renovated Byzantine galleries, toward the Medieval Hall. "I said, 'I can't perform. I can't pretend to know more about these objects than our curators, and God forbid I should ever make that claim.'"

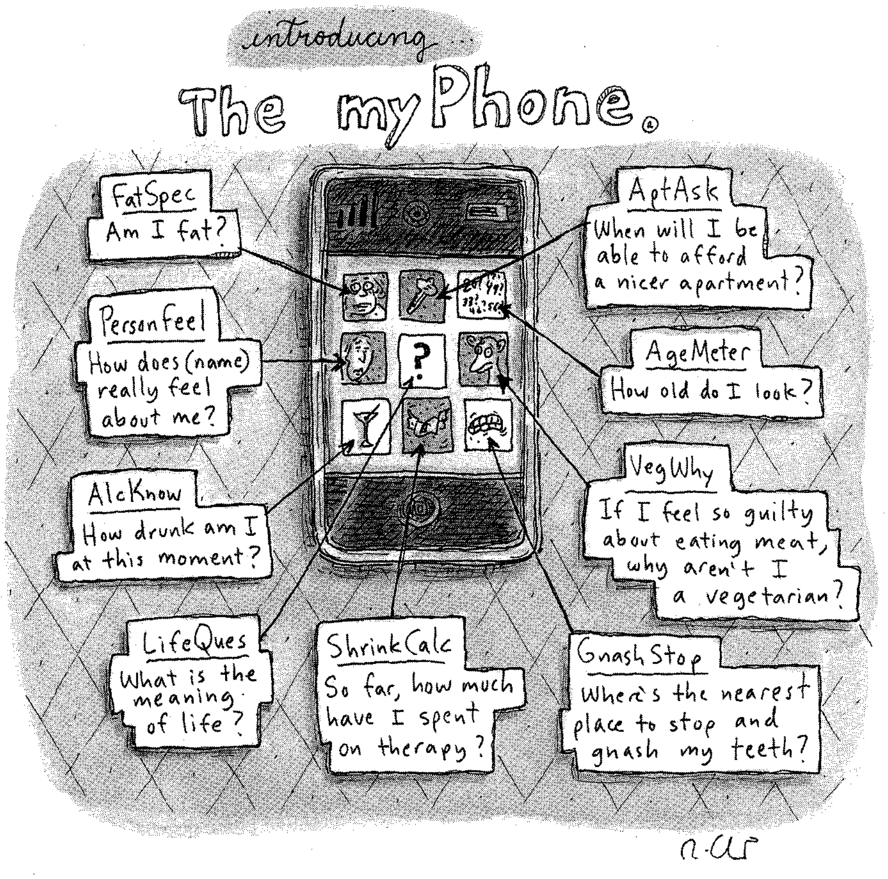
We began in the Lehman Wing, where he paused in front of an object about which he does know as much as anyone in the world: a tapestry, circa 1520, depicting the Last Supper. It showed a life-size figure of Christ at a table set with a decorative cloth, surrounded by his disciples: John resting his head upon Christ's chest, eyes closed; Judas, a bulging moneybag tucked into his belt, raising one leg to step over the bench, making a dash for the exit. It had been owned by Henry VIII, and it would have taken a team of artisans a year to weave together its silk and silver threads, now tarnished. "Of the hundreds of objects one would want to save in a fire, this would be one of the ones I would most run for," he said. "Certain works of art, in the grand progression of art history, absolutely encapsulate a moment of key development, and this is one." The designer, Bernaert van Orley, was a portrait painter working in Brussels, he explained. Until the early sixteenth century, Flemish tapestries were rich in decorative detail but unrealistic in their representation of volume and depth and movement. In the fifteen-tens, however, Raphael began sending cartoons for tapestries from Rome to Brussels. "The Last Supper," with its combination of complex patterns and naturalistic representation, represents a fusion of Northern and Southern styles. "You have artists like van Orley first being exposed to the style of design Raphael had developed—highly illusionistic, life-size figures acting in a fully defined space," Campbell said. "Van Orley really revolutionized the way tapestry was considered. It's like someone going from still photography and heralding in the moving picture."

Campbell ushered me to the Asian rooms, where there was a special exhibition of art works from the Ming dynasty, which roughly corresponds to the Renaissance. "I don't pretend to know the slightest thing about Asian art, but it is one of the things I am really enjoying learning about," he said. He particularly appreciates the Chinese art of watercolor, he told me, since he's an amateur watercolorist, and even imagined as a teen-ager that he might become an artist, though it's been a couple of years since he's picked up a brush. We stopped in front of a silk scroll from 1437, which portrayed a number of Chinese noblemen in an apricot orchard, engaged in leisure pursuits such as painting and chess playing. "This is when Jan van Eyck is painting 'The Arnolfini Marriage,'" Campbell said. "Here we have eight or nine of the most powerful figures in China—and they chose to commemorate their meeting showing themselves in a garden, occupied in activities of the highest refinement. It's as if you had an image of the Duke of Burgundy, the Duke of Berry, and the King of France."

Next, we took the great staircase to European Paintings, where Campbell



"Let's just invade the picnic, stay for five minutes, and leave."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So far, how much have I spent on therapy?
AptAsk
When will I be able to afford a nicer apartment?
AgeMeter
How old do I look?
VegWhy
If I feel so guilty about eating meat, why aren't I a vegetarian?
GnashStop
Where's the nearest place to stop and gnash my teeth?

stopped in front of a canvas by Bassano, a Venetian contemporary of Titian's, depicting the baptism of Christ as if it were taking place after dark—an unusual and sombre interpretation. "Think of the Piero della Francesca in the National Gallery in London, with the beautiful pellucid sky," Campbell said. "Here the figures are just emerging from the shadows, and, as the water falls from the container that John the Baptist is using, Christ's expression is one of agony. So in this moment you have the foreshadowing of his own suffering and sacrifice."

The picture had taken its place on the wall only a few weeks earlier: a promised gift from Mark Fisch, a trustee, it was one of two major works that Campbell brought to his first acquisitions meeting, just days after taking over, in January. (The other was a sixteenth-century bronze lamp by Riccio.) The acquisitions meeting was a gratifying moment, Campbell told me, not least because the museum was at the same time running a special exhibition called "The Philippe de Montebello Years," which showcased three hundred or so of the choicest objects acquired during the outgoing director's tenure. These included Vermeer's "Study of a Young Woman," Jasper Johns's "White Flag," and Duccio's "Madonna and Child," which was bought in 2003, for more than forty-five million dollars—the museum's most costly purchase ever. When Campbell visited the show, he told me, his reaction was one of the connoisseur's delight combined with professional anxiety. "I thought, My God, especially with the economy going south, how am I going to buy *anything*?"

In fact, Campbell has been telling wary trustees that in disaster may lie opportunity: works of art may now make it to the market that might not have done so in happier economic times. Similarly, the dire financial circumstances of the museum will allow him to make some changes that he would have wanted to make anyway, such as reducing the number of special exhibitions, thus letting the staff spend more time rethinking how to present the permanent collection in a way that is friendlier to casual visitors. Mulling the merits of explicatory placards in each gallery is less glamorous than signing checks for masterpieces, but Campbell can become as consumed by a discussion of signage as an urban planner puzzling over traffic management.

The Met is a notoriously territorial place—its departments have often been compared to fortified hilltop settlements—but Campbell says that he hopes to encourage greater interdepartmental coöperation in conceiving of shows that draw in fresh ways upon the museum's existing holdings, "so that we are not just stuck with an endless cycle of monographic shows of nineteenth-century artists—which are wonderful, but we have had a lot of them." He went on, "For example, we are very rich in textiles made in Asia for the European and American market. So one could mount an exhibition that traces textiles from their origins in Asia, and the circumstances that gave rise to their production, through to the European interiors and fashion where they were delivered and cut and used, and then all the way through to the American market. That would combine our Asian department, our European Sculpture and Decorative Arts department, maybe our European Paintings department, in terms of portrayals of the textiles, and then our American department."

Campbell has not yet officially approved any major exhibitions, citing a full roster for the next year and beyond. He's also planning to appoint an exhibitions committee, to which ideas will first be brought, something that de Montebello did without. George Goldner says, "Philippe was a man who didn't use the word 'no' very frequently as director, and he had the luxury of not having to. He made decisions quickly and often instinctively, and in many ways, for that reason, inconsistently. I think Tom is more objective and analytical. So I think he will be able to say no, and not just because he has to—although he does have to." Campbell assured me that, even after the exhibitions committee is established, he will have the final word. "I can still be totally arbitrary," he says.

He has also been contemplating new ways of presenting works. Noting the Guggenheim's unconventional use of its spaces—in 2008, the Chinese artist Cai Guo-qiang suspended in the rotunda seven cars decked with flashing neon, as if they were exploding—he says that the public spaces in the Met might conceivably be used for installations of contemporary art. "Though I am not promising exploding cars in the Great Hall," he adds. He is suggesting ideas for displays that might not have occurred to de Montebello. Wardropper recently brought to Campbell an idea from a curator for a show devoted to Abraham and David Roentgen—father-and-son cabinetmakers from the eighteenth century, whose furniture often incorporates surprising features, such as hidden banks of drawers, which are revealed at the spring of a latch. Ian Wardropper says, "Tom wanted a rigorous approach to the number of objects, and the quality, but he also wanted us to exploit technology in showing the moving qualities of the furniture, through video displays."

Campbell is considerably more at ease with technology than his predecessor. He wants to improve the Met's clumsy Web site; to his frustration, only a fraction of the museum's holdings are displayed online. Technology will become much more widespread at the museum—without being intrusive, he maintains. "We can have people with handheld devices and headphones customizing their visits to the museum," he says. "The great thing about modern technology is that we can do it discreetly, so that the underlying experience of walking through the museum galleries doesn't have to change—you can still have beautiful objects, beautifully lit, with a lot of space around them." If it might strike some visitors to the Met as a diminution of their pleasure to be surrounded by hundreds of ear-budded visitors, Campbell is not among them. "Nothing wrong with that," he told me, cheerily. "Keeps them quiet."

Campbell has charged Carrie Rebora Barratt, a curator in the American Wing and a close ally, with thinking about ways to improve what is known as the "visitor experience." Barratt showed me around the recently reopened American Wing, where many of the period rooms have been equipped with touch screens imparting contextual information (and, in the Verplanck Room, imparting a bluish glow against the wood panels and Copley portraits, as if an eighteenth-century merchant were experiencing an alien visitation). Barratt buzzed with ideas, suggesting that the museum might offer something along the lines of Pandora, the Web site that asks a listener for a favorite singer and recommends other singers who share similar characteristics. As she put it to me, "If you like this chair from the late eighteenth century in New York, maybe you'd like to see the English chair across the museum."

The institution's new advertising campaign, "It's Time We Met," also reflects an enthusiasm for technology: it was generated through Flickr, the photo-sharing site, and features cheeky images taken by visitors to the galleries, such as a couple kissing in front of a Rodin sculpture of embracing lovers, and a young woman with her open mouth shaped in a perfect O, standing by an Oceanic figure with an open mouth shaped in a perfect O. "Some kids wrapped themselves up in toilet roll in front of the Egyptian mummies," Campbell says. "You've got to take your hat off to them for getting away with that with our guards standing around."

Not long ago, Campbell attended a cocktail party for supporters of the museum. The evening was officially billed as an opportunity to tour the newly reinstalled Byzantine galleries, but the main draw was the new director. "My challenge is I've met several thousand people since September," Campbell said, as he stood in the Petrie Court, a glass of white wine in hand. "I have a good visual memory—I can remember the detail of a border of tapestry I saw ten years ago—but less so for names. I've found that 'How good to see you!' is very useful."

A few dozen folding chairs had been set up amid the sculptures, as if for a wedding; and after being introduced by Eliot Nolen, a museum trustee and chair of the major-gifts committee, Campbell took to the lectern, delivering a version of remarks he has made many times in recent months—a stump speech given after the election. "I want to reassure you that the institution you know and love so well, in spite of the transition, remains on track, and very much devoted to the mission you have all supported so loyally," he began. "I am very much a product—not a child, but a product—of this institution, and the values that Philippe has championed." No one, least of all he, had expected that his first few months would be consumed by a financial crisis, Campbell went on; but he assured his listeners that the measures taken—the cuts in staff, in the volume of exhibitions, in the extent of publications—would not interfere with its core mission of enlightening visitors. "We will come out of this period slightly leaner, but healthy," he said. "It's challenging, but exciting at the same time."

It was hardly a rousing address, but these are times in which a careful, safe pair of hands are appreciated, and so is a sober, reassuring voice. Campbell was heartily applauded. Mary Jaharis, a museum trustee for whom, along with her husband, Michael, the newly expanded Byzantine galleries are named, was among those nodding her approbation. Allan Weissglass, a trustee who is the chairman of the committee for external affairs, declared himself impressed by Campbell's stewardship so far. "I tell people, 'Don't expect Tom to be Philippe, because Philippe wasn't Philippe when he started,'" he said.

After completing his remarks, Campbell took up a position by the entrance to the courtyard, and greeted guests as they wandered into the galleries to listen to Helen Evans, their curator. Afterward, he went to the bar and peeled off the sticker bearing his name from his lapel. When I asked him if he missed being a scholar, he paused before answering.

"It's very strange," he said, balling up his name tag as he spoke. "I flew overnight to London last Wednesday to be interviewed for a BBC documentary about Henry VIII. I had to go to London anyway, so I said I'd do it. I had a day of work meetings on Thursday, and on Friday I got up early in the morning, and was in a car at six-fifteen, going to Hampton Court to be filmed at seven. And it wasn't until I was in the car that I thought, Fuck, I can't remember anything about Henry VIII!

"I was really conscious, sitting in the car, that I was having to try to find the keys of the locker," he said, gesturing at the side of his head, as if unlocking a jewel box. "That was poignant. It made me aware of the extent that I have been drawn into another world." He straightened himself, and pocketed the remains of his name tag. He said, "I'll get back to it eventually." ◆

FICTION

THE FIVE WOUNDS

BY KIRSTIN VALDEZ QUADE

This year Amadeo Padilla is Jesus. The hermanos have been practicing in the dirt yard behind the morada, which used to be a filling station. People are saying that Amadeo is the best Jesus they've had in years, maybe the best since Manuel García.

Here it is, just Holy Tuesday, and even those who would rather spend the evening at home watching their satellite TVs are lined up in the alley, leaning in, fingers curled around the chain-link, because they can see that Amadeo is bringing something special to the role.

This is no silky-haired, rosy-cheeked, honey-eyed Jesus, no Jesus-of-the-children, Jesus-with-the-lambs. Amadeo is pockmarked and bad-toothed, hair shaved close to a scalp scarred from fights, roll of skin where skull meets thick neck. You name the sin, he's done it: gluttony, sloth, fucked a second cousin on the dark bleachers at the high school.

Amadeo builds the cross out of heavy rough oak instead of pine. He's barefoot like the rest of the hermanos, who have rolled up the cuffs of their pants and now drag the arches of their feet over sharp rocks behind him. The Mayor Hermano—Amadeo's grand-tío Tivé, who owns the electronics store, and who surprised them all when he chose his niece's lazy son (because, he told Yolanda, Amadeo could use a lesson in sacrifice)—plays the pito, and the thin piping notes rise in a whine. A few hermanos swat their backs with disciplinas. Unlike the others, though, Amadeo does not groan, and he is shirtless, his tattooed back broad under the still hot sun.

Today, he woke with the idea of studding the cross with nails to give it extra weight, and this is what people watch: he holds the hammer with both hands high above his head, brings it down with a crack. The boards bounce, the sound strikes sharply off the outside wall of the morada.

Amadeo has broken out in a sweat, and they all take note. Amadeo sweats, but not usually from work. He sweats when he eats, he sweats when he drinks too much. Thirty-three years old, the same as Our Lord, but Amadeo is not a man with ambition. Even his mother will tell you that. Yolanda still cooks for him, pushes one plate across the table at him and another at whatever man she's got with her.

And now here comes old Manuel García, dragging his bad foot up the alley, his wounded hands curled at his sides. He must have heard about the show that Amadeo is putting on, because when else does he exert himself, except to buy liquor at the Peerless? As he nears the morada, the people part to give him a spot against the chain-link, right there in the middle. Now, instead of watching Amadeo, they watch Manuel. He coughs wetly between strikes of the hammer.

Manuel García is old, but still a legend: in 1962 he begged the hermanos to use nails, and he hasn't been able to open or close his hands since. It's true the legend has soured a little, now that he hasn't been able to work for forty-five years and has been kept alive by the combined generosity of the hermandad, the parish, and the state, and shows no sign of dying. Some people have stopped paying their tithes for this very reason. Some have even gone so far as to say that maybe the man was suicidal, and a death wish is not the same as devotion, even if they do look alike.

Regardless, only Manuel García is qualified to judge this new Christ, and it appears that he has arrived at his verdict, because he coughs again, wet and low, dislodges something deep in his throat, and spits it through a space in the fence so that it lands just inches from Amadeo and his cross.

Driving home, Amadeo tries to regain the clarity he felt when pounding nails, but hand and foot and universe are no longer working together. When the gears scrape, he hits the steering wheel with his fist and swears and hits it again.

This last week was the most important in Jesus' life. This is the week everything happened. So Amadeo should be thinking of higher things when his daughter shows up eight months pregnant. Angel sits in front of the house on the bumper of the old truck, waiting for him. He hasn't seen her in more than a year, but he's heard the news from his mother, who heard it from Angel.

White tank top, black bra, gold cross pointing the way to her breasts in case you happened to miss them. Belly as hard and round as a loaf of Russian bread. The buttons of her jeans are unsnapped to make way for its fullness, and also to indicate how it got that way in the first place. Her birthday is this week, falls on Good Friday. She'll be fifteen.

"Shit," Amadeo says when he pulls in and yanks the parking brake. She must not have seen his expression, because she gets up, smiles, and waves with both hands. The rosary swings on his rearview mirror, and Amadeo watches as, beyond it, his daughter advances on him, stomach outthrust. She pauses, half turns, displays her belly for him.

She's got a big gold purse with her, and a duffelbag, he sees, courtesy of Marlboro. Amadeo gets out. Her hug is straight on, belly pressing into him.

"I'm fat, huh? I barely got these pants and already they're too small."

"Hey." He pats his daughter's back between her bra straps, then, because he is thinking of her stomach, thinking of her pregnant, steps away. "What's happening?" he says. He realizes it's too casual, but he can't afford to let her think she's welcome, not this week, Passion Week, and with his mother away.

"My mom and me got in a fight, so she dropped me off. I didn't know where you and Gramma were."

Amadeo hooks his thumbs in his pockets, looks up at the house, then back at the road. The sun is gone now; it will be dark soon.

"Fight?"

Angel sighs. "I don't know why she gotta be all judging me, trying to act all mature. Whatever," she says without bitterness. "What me and the baby needs right now is a support system."

"A what?" The clarity is long gone. He shakes his head. "I'm real busy," he says, like an actor portraying regret. "Now's not a good time."

Angel doesn't look hurt, just interested. "Why?"

She lifts her duffel and begins to walk toward the door. "My mom's not here," he calls. He's embarrassed to tell her, embarrassed by the fervor that being a penitente implies. "I'm carrying the cross this year. I'm Jesus."

"And I'm the Virgin Mary. Where's Gramma, well?" She holds the screen open with her hip, waiting for him to unlock the door.

"Over there in Vegas with her boyfriend."

Angel laughs, a raucous teen-age

DELILAH MONTOYA, "JARAMILLO" (1998)/ANDREW SMITH GALLERY

laugh. "We're all *kinds* of Virgin Mary."

Yolanda is making her way across Nevada in a travel trailer with Cal Wilson, and, depending on how things go, she could be home tomorrow or in a month. As if to check if she's coming, Amadeo turns and sees Manuel García standing in the road, watching him and his daughter.

The old man's ruined face spreads into a grin around collapsed teeth. Loose, dirty pants are cinched at his waist with a belt, his wounded hands before him. Amadeo's mouth goes dry.

Up on the step, Angel is saying, "I was all, Whatever, take me to Gramma's if you want to. She don't care."

Amadeo turns from Manuel García. He takes the duffel from Angel's hand and pushes open the aluminum door. "Come on."

That night, Angel chatters about food groups as she makes dinner—a can of chili dumped over an underdone squash and a package of frozen cheese bread—then takes over the TV. She talks to her belly as she watches "America's Next Top Model." "See, baby? That heifer is going home. You can't be like that to your girls and win the game."

Amadeo sits at the other end of the couch, uneasy. He wipes his palms along his thighs, works his tongue inside his mouth. Three times he looks out the front window, but the old man is gone. With a sudden stitch in his gut, Amadeo thinks of Tío Tivé. He can't know that Angel's here and pregnant for all the world to see.

"So," Amadeo says. "Your mom's probably gonna want you back soon, no?"

"No. I'm staying here with you and Gramma awhile. I gotta teach her she's not the only one in my life."

Amadeo kneads his thigh. He can't tell her to leave. Yolanda would kill him. He just wishes that Yolanda were here. She and Angel are pretty close; Yolanda sends the girl checks, twenty-five here, fifty there, and a couple of times a year the two go shopping at the outlet stores near Santa Fe. Amadeo tries to remember the last time he was alone with his daughter, but can't. Two or three Christmases ago, maybe; he remembers sitting awkwardly in this same room asking Angel about her favorite subjects while Yolanda was at the grocery store or the neighbors'.

Amadeo is having trouble breathing. Why now? Why does she have to visit now? "Maybe you could visit when my mom gets home." A needle of guilt slides into his side.

Angel doesn't seem to have heard him. "I mean, the woman's all preaching to me about how I messed up and why couldn't I learn from her mistake, but what am I gonna do now, huh? I mean, I get it. It's gonna hurt like hell and I'm missing prom and did you know I probably won't get to sleep a whole night until it's three years old? I'll be *eighteen* by then."

Angel looks like her mother. Amadeo doesn't remember Marissa acting this young back then. Marissa was sixteen, Amadeo eighteen, but they felt old, he is sure of that. Her parents had been angry and ashamed, but had thrown a baby shower for the young couple anyway. Amadeo had enjoyed being at the center of things: congratulated by her relatives and his, handed tamales and biscochitos on paper plates by old women who were willing to forgive everything in exchange for a church wedding. He stood to sing for them, nodding at Marissa: "This is dedicated to my baby girl." *Bendito, bendito, bendito sea Dios, los ángeles cantan y daban a Dios.* They all clapped, the old ladies dabbing their eyes, Yolanda blowing kisses across the room.

Later, of course, after there was no wedding, no moving in together, after Angel was born and learned to walk and talk—with no help from Amadeo—he was relieved by how easily the obligation slipped from his shoulders. The old women shook their heads, resigned; they should have known better than to expect anything from Amadeo, from men in general. "Even the best of them aren't worth a darn," his grandmother used to say. By the time Angel was five and Amadeo had moved with his mother back to the little town where he'd grown up and where their family still lived, he felt lucky to have been let off the hook.

As though answering a question, Angel says, "I didn't drop out of school for reals. I'm gonna start back up after the baby comes, so don't worry." She looks at Amadeo, waiting.

Amadeo realizes that he forgot to worry, forgot even to wonder. "Good. That's good." He gets up, rubs his shorn head with both hands. "You got to have school."

She's still looking at him, demanding something: reassurance, approval. "I mean, I'm serious. I'm really going back." Then she's off, talking about college and success and following her dreams, the things she hears at the parenting class she goes to at the clinic with other girls her age. "I got to invest in myself if I'm gonna give him a good life. You won't see me like my mom, just doing the same old secretary job for ten years. I'm doing something big." She turns to her belly. "Isn't that right, hijito?"

This depresses the hell out of Amadeo. He opens a beer and guzzles half of it before he remembers who he is this week. "Fuck," he says, disgusted with himself, and pours it down the drain.

Angel looks up at him from the couch. "You better clean up your mouth. I don't want him hearing you say that. He can hear every little thing you say."

"Fuck," Amadeo says again, because it's his house, but he says it quietly, and thinks about the sound passing through his daughter's body to the child inside.

The teacher of Angel's parenting class has arranged for someone to drive her into Española at two-thirty every afternoon. Angel is up by seven. Amadeo can hear her, clattering dishes, the TV going. Midmorning, she's in the shower. The pipes hiss and gurgle in the wall near his head. He flops over in his limp bed, tries not to think of her, the naked lumps of flesh, but he can't help it. *Christ's pain*, he reminds himself. *Think of that.* Each day, Amadeo practices his face in the bathroom mirror after he showers, water running down his forehead. He spreads his arms, makes the muscles in his face tighten and fall, tries to learn the nuances of suffering. It makes him queasy. It makes him queasier to think about whoever got Angel this way. This is not a detail that made it into the story Amadeo heard from his mother, but he doesn't need facts to picture it: some Española cholo dealing meth from the trunk of his lowrider. When he finally hears Angel leave, Amadeo gets up. He watches from the kitchen window until the teacher's car is out of sight, then sinks into the chair in relief and eats the cold eggs and bacon that she has left out for him.

He's on the couch with a Coke and the remote balanced on his thighs when Angel comes home. As she swings her backpack to the linoleum, she looks at him, surprised. "Aren't you working?"

"It's Holy Wednesday," he says.

"Where you working now?"

"It's slow. I'm waiting to hear."

"Huh." Angel drops to the couch, then scoots down so her neck is cricked and her belly high.

Who is she to criticize? "I'm getting something together with Anthony Vigil. We're doing a business, outfitting cars for the races down in Albuquerque." Actually, this was the plan—Amadeo enjoyed working with Anthony, and was good at it, reboring the engine, replacing the metal front and sides with fibreglass, removing what wasn't essential. Yolanda had been glad that Amadeo was "getting involved" and had offered to give them what she could afford to start them out. But in the end Anthony partnered with his cousin Berto. "No offense, man," Anthony told Amadeo, "but in a business you gotta know your partner's going to show up."

"Huh," Angel says again. After a moment, "You still sing ever?"

"Nah." Not for years, though at one time he'd thought he could actually go somewhere with it. He's grateful to Angel for remembering; Amadeo offers her his Coke.

She shakes her head. "It'll dissolve his baby bones."

From eleven on, Angel was a little shit: surly, talking nasty, applying dark lip liner like she was addicted to it. Amadeo remembers when she was younger; he looked forward to when she'd come from Española to stay with him and his mom, enjoyed taking her out for the day, showing her off to his friends. He felt like a good influence, teaching her how to check the oil and eat ribs and not to listen to Boyz II Men. She was sweet then, eager to please, riding in the truck, fiddling with the radio, asking him at each song, "Is this good? Do you like this one?" When he'd nod, she'd settle back and try to sing along, listening hard, each word coming a little too late. Sometimes Amadeo would sing, too, his voice filling the cab, and Angel would look up at him, delighted.

Now she resembles that child again—her cheeks full and pink—but there's something frightening about her. It's as though she's reëntered the world, proud to be a member in good standing. Now she regales Amadeo with facts she's learned in her parenting class, facts about fluids and brain stems and genitals. "Like, did you know he had his toes before he even got his little dick?"

Amadeo looks at her, surprised, then back at the TV. "Why you gotta tell me that?"

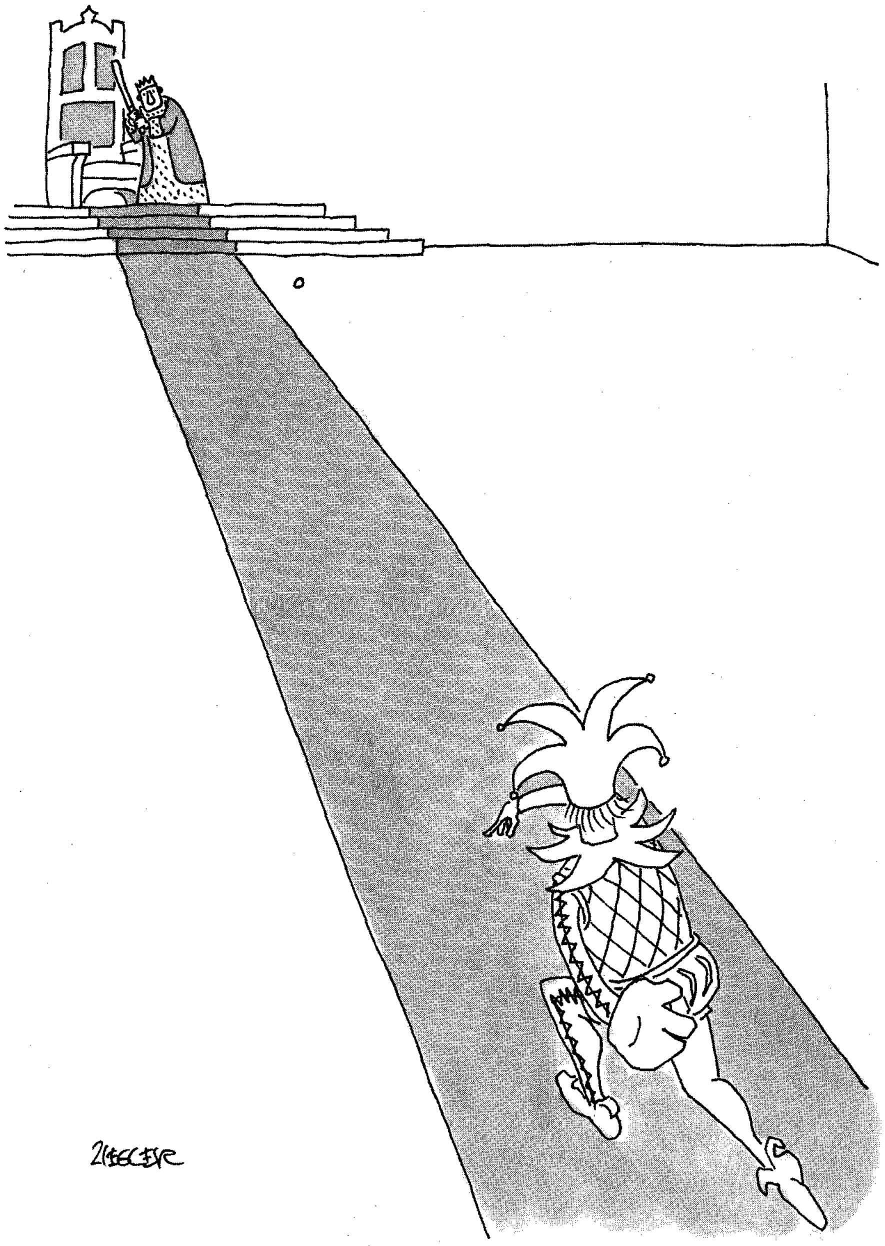
Angel faces him enthusiastically, grinning around her big white teeth, one foot tucked under her belly. "Weird, huh, that there's a dick floating around in me? Do you ever think about that? How Gramma is the first girl you had your dick in?"

"The fuck. That's disgusting." Amadeo is horrified; this is his *daughter*.

"Jesus, too," she says, singsong. "Jesus had his stuff in Mary." She laughs. "Couple of virgins. There's something for your research." She settles back into the couch, pleased.

Angel has seemed only mildly interested in Passion Week, which is a relief to Amadeo, and an irritation. "So it's like a play?" she asks.

"It's *not* a play—it's real. More real . . ." He doesn't know how to explain it to



her. More real even than taking Communion, Tío Tivé had said months ago when he sat with Amadeo at the Burger Barn and offered him the part. Tío Tivé told him, looking at him severely, "You got a chance to thank Jesus, to hurt with Him just a little."

Angel asks, "They're going to whip you and stuff? Like, actually hard?"

He's proud, can't keep the smile from creeping in. "Yeah."

"My friend Lisette cuts herself, but she just does it for attention."

"It's not like that. It's like a way to pray."

Angel whistles low. "Crazy." She seems to be thinking about this, turns a pink crocheted cushion slowly in her hands. Amadeo waits, exposed. "So it's gonna hurt."

He tries to formulate the words to explain to Angel that the *point* is to hurt, to see what Christ went through for us, but he's tongue-tied and shy about saying these things, as shy as he'd be if he were explaining it to his old friends. And he isn't even sure he's got it right. But here it is: his chance to prove to them all—and God, too—everything he's capable of. "But it's a secret, right? You can't go tell nobody back in Española."

"Why?"

"The Church don't agree. You just can't say anything."

"Can I see it? The morada?"

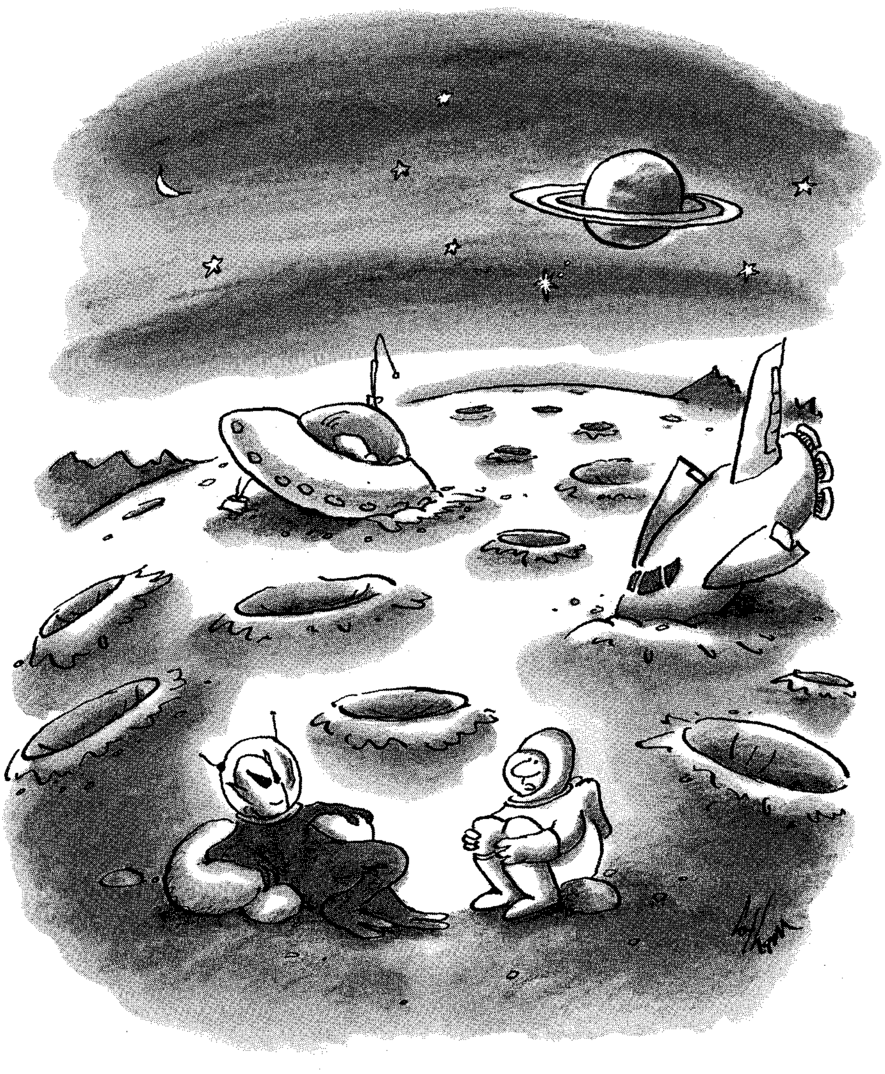
He'd like her to see it, to see what he's the center of. "Tío Tivé don't let women in there. You can go to Mass at the church. You can be in the procession."

Angel scrunches her face. "Can't I just see it? Once? You're *Jesus*, aren't you?"

"Tío Tivé would kill me."

She's good-natured in her pleading, all smiles. "Come *on*."

"Women can't go in. And besides . . ." Before he can stop himself, he glances down at her belly. Her face slackens and she turns back to the TV.



"We seem to have similar life experiences."

When Amadeo looks again, she's crying soundlessly, her face blotchy and ugly, mascara running down her cheeks. It's not his fault. He didn't tell her to be a girl. He didn't tell her to get knocked up. They were doing so well, she was showing some interest, he was feeling so good. "It's just a building. It's mostly empty, anyway."

But now Angel's shoulders rock. She has her fist pressed over her mouth, and she's still not making a sound.

"Hey. Hey, don't cry." He turns awkwardly on the couch, pats the shoulder near him.

When she speaks, it's with a gasp. "You think I'm too dirty for your morada. Is that it? Too dirty for your morada, too dirty for prom, too dirty for everything."

An image flashes: Angel naked, sweaty and grunting with some boy.

"You're not dirty," he says.

Guilt thick as tar bubbles in his gut, and suddenly he's nineteen again and it's summer, and he's with Marissa in her parents' back yard. They stretch out by the kiddie pool, beers warming in their hands and in the sun, while Angel plays with a plastic dinosaur. They're talking about Marissa's older sister's new trailer—two bedrooms, full bath, cream carpet—and Marissa says she wouldn't mind a trailer, they could get a trailer, used at first, and beside them Angel splashes, a blade of grass stuck to her chest. Amadeo says, "You won't catch me living in no trailer. Besides, they just lose value," and Marissa says, stubbing out her cigarette emphatically in the grass, "It's not that I wouldn't rather have a house, but when? And we gotta be saving if we ever want to have a place of our own—are you even saving *anything*?" This is when the fight starts, escalates. Amadeo accuses Marissa of getting pregnant just so he'll have to take care of her, and he calls her *dirty, dirty whore*. (She isn't, he knows that, hasn't done any more than he has, but ever since she had sex with him he can't look at her the same way.) Then they're both on their feet, and he slaps her, hard across the upper arm, which is bare and exposed in her sleeveless shirt. Marissa staggers back, reaches behind her into air to steady herself, finds no hold, falls.

Amadeo looks at his hitting hand, horrified. But if he were honest he might admit that even as he moved to hit her he knew he could stop himself and knew he was going to do it regardless. The real surprise is the shock on her face, proof that he can act on the world.

Marissa stands. The skin on her arm turns white then red where his palm made contact.

"You asshole! Don't you ever hit me again." She screams at him, throwing plastic buckets and toys. Some strike him, some miss and fall to the grass. Amadeo wishes she'd kill him. But she keeps yelling, "Don't you ever hit me again!"

And it is that word, "again," that terrifies him, as if by uttering it she opens up the possibility that he has it in him to do this again—even, somehow, makes it inevitable. From the kiddie pool, Angel looks up at her parents, eyes wide and black and unwavering.

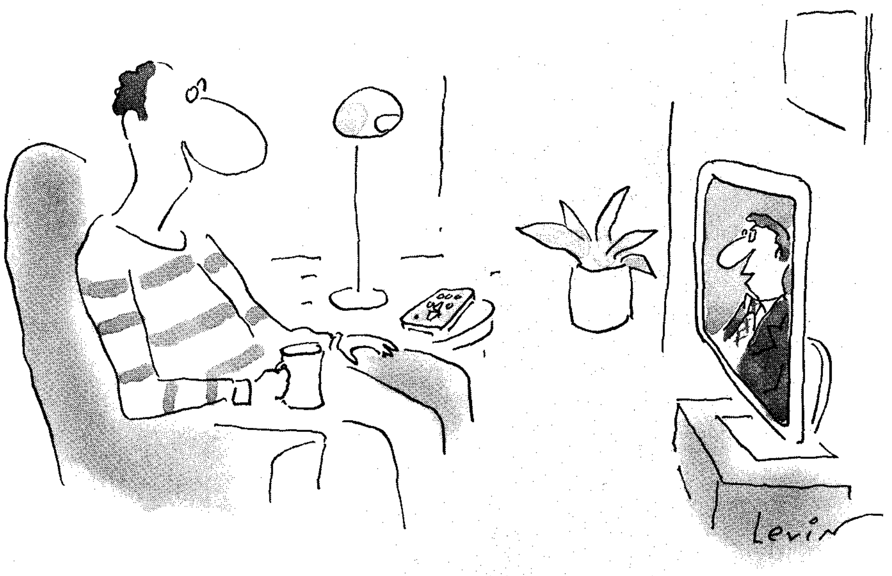
"Don't you walk away!" Marissa yells, and Amadeo turns just long enough to see her grab the baby, too roughly, Angel's head jerking back as Marissa swings her onto her hip, water from the baby's sodden diaper spreading dark across her shirt, her denim cutoffs, down her short brown legs. She's yelling at him, calling him names, and he's thinking of how loud her voice must be so near Angel's soft pink ear.

Even as he starts the truck, Amadeo doesn't think he'll go through with it. His breath is ragged, he's shaking, and he's on Paseo de Oñate before he realizes he's somehow gripping the dinosaur in his hand.

Now, fourteen years later, Amadeo turns to Angel, who cries into her hands.

He looks at his watch. Almost eleven. He touches her shoulder again. "Come on. Let's go."

The morada is not much to look at. Outside there's still the dark skeleton of a sign on a pole from when it was a filling station, the bright plastic panels long gone, and two blank pumps. During the day, strangers passing by will pull in for gas and look around, confused by the trucks parked in front, before heading straight through town to the Shell station on the highway. Tonight the parking lot is deserted.



"Earlier today, the F.D.A. recalled billions of dollars in tainted money."

Inside, the cinder-block walls are painted white, and a few benches face the front. The only thing worth looking at is the crucifix, and Amadeo watches Angel take it in. She walks the periphery of the room, stopping at various points to gaze at the man on the Cross. This Christ is not like the Christ in the church: shiny plastic plaster, chaste beads of blood where crown meets temple, expression exquisite, prissy, a perfect balance of compassion and suffering and—yes, it's there—self-pity. No, this Christ, the wooden Christ nailed up on the morada wall, is ancient and bloody. There is violence in the very carving: chisel marks gouge belly and thigh, leave fingers and toes stumpy. The contours of the face are rough, ribs sharp, the body emaciated. Someone's real hair hangs limply from the statue's head. The artist did not stop at five wounds but inflicted his brush generously on the thin body. And there are the nails. Three. One in each hand, one skewering the long, pale feet. Amadeo feels his own palms throb and ache.

When he hears a noise, for a moment he thinks it comes from outside, but it is closer, inside the morada. A rustle. Amadeo looks from his daughter to the statue.

The suffering is garish under the buzzing fluorescent bulb: blood flows down Christ's pale neck and torso and knees, smears the Cross and the wall behind Him, every wound deep and effusive. This statue's pain is personal and cruel, and He's not bearing it with perfect grace. Suddenly Amadeo knows that the statue on the crucifix is a living man, a living witness to his transgression. He looks wildly from the statue to Angel, then back, heart pounding and hands trembling.

"There aren't no Baby Jesuses here, are there?" Angel observes. No Blessed Mother, either, no audience of saints. "I guess it's not a good idea for Baby Jesus to have to see hisself later." Her voice is tired. She taps her belly distractedly, walks a few steps, stops. "I wouldn't want my baby to know."

Amadeo waits in dread for the statue to move, to lift His head. To fix Amadeo with His eyes.

Angel makes her slow way around the room again, stopping every few feet, head tilted. She turns to him, face pale and slack, blotchy from crying, and he is startled when she asks, "So you really want to know what it feels like?" With her finger she traces a trickle of blood down the bound wooden feet. "Why?"

He can't say it, but his answer is this: he needs to know if he has it in him to ask for the nails, if he can get up there in front of the whole town and do a performance so convincing he'll transubstantiate right there on the cross into some-

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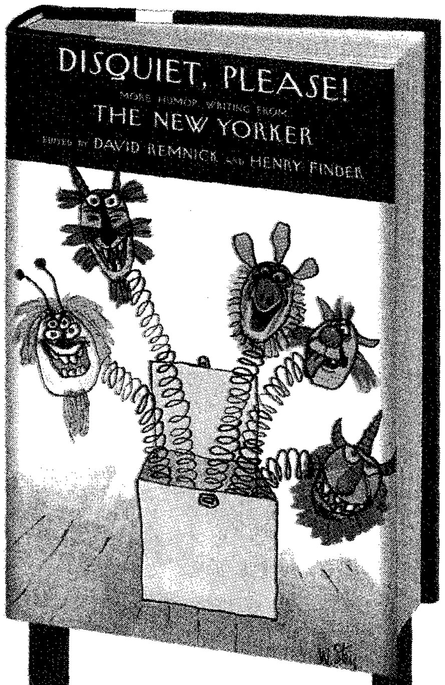

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thing real. He looks at the statue. Total redemption in one gesture, if only he can do it right.

Angel, no longer waiting for his answer, shrugs and turns to the door. As he watches it shut behind her, a longing wells in him so rich and painful that he must touch the wall to steady himself. At the front of the room, Jesus hasn't moved, wholly absorbed in His own pain.

Amadeo switches off the light, checks the lock on the morada door. Angel heaves herself into the cab of the truck, looking like a kid in her too large jacket. She yawns, makes an effort to talk about other things all the way home, and Amadeo does not tell her what he sees that keeps him silent: Manuel García, standing on the other side of the road in front of the dark windows of the drugstore, watching.

Since early morning, Manuel García has been sitting on a lawn chair in front of the house, scratching his balls with his stiff-curled claw. When Amadeo gets up after eleven, Angel is planted at the table with a glass of milk, watching the old man watch the house. She doesn't shift her eyes from the window when Amadeo ambles in, rubbing his head with the heel of his hand. "Who is that, well? Is he retarded or something?"

Amadeo considers pulling on a shirt, then decides not to. He bangs out the front door and across the yard, working his fists, limbs loose with adrenaline. "Hey, man. Go on home. You're scaring my daughter."

Manuel García gazes up through pink eyes. "The puta whore. No Jesus never lived in a house of putas."

"You watch your mouth, viejo."

"Puta whore mama y puta whore daughter." Manuel García smiles, because he knows he's an old man and cannot be hit. He's spent his whole life making people uncomfortable. He scratches his balls again and squints into the sun behind Amadeo.

"Go on home," Amadeo says again, suddenly afraid, as if the old man had the power to work evil, though, of course, he doesn't.

"I seen you last night. You know I seen you. Bringing her in the santuario."

Amadeo considers denying it, then considers pushing the old man into the dirt, grinding the lumpy skull beneath his heel.

As though he'd read Amadeo's mind, Manuel coughs and spits, nearly hitting Amadeo's work boot. Amadeo flinches, and the old man laughs. "Hija de Jesús, shaking her nalgas until someone gives it to her good."

Amadeo steps toward Manuel. "Shut your mouth."

"I'm thinking what your uncle will say when he finds out a whore been in the morada." He blinks red-rimmed eyes, smiles blandly. Suddenly he lunges forward, pointing his finger at Amadeo. "You watch how quick they cut you down from that cross," he hisses. "They'll cut you down fast."

Amadeo thinks he might throw up. He kicks the dirt. "Don't you come back here again," he says, and turns back to the house.

Manuel García calls to Amadeo's retreating back, "No Jesus never defiled the santuario!"

Amadeo lets the screen door slam.

"What'd he say?" Angel asks, still watching out the window. Sitting there, plump and content, she seems inviolable in her impending motherhood. He tries to remind himself how young she is. But he's furious at her, for giving Manuel García something to sneer at, for tainting his Passion Week with her pregnancy and her personality.

Amadeo goes to his room. The bed is unmade, clothes piled on the floor. He's angrier now—look at this, living here like a surly teen-ager—and comes back out to reclaim the living room. He doesn't know what to do with his hands. Hit a wall, break something, put his daughter in her place. "Don't you even got a boyfriend?"

Angel turns and looks at him like he's stupid. "What do you think?"

"Didn't your mom never teach you not to sleep around?"

"All the girls in my parenting class, not one of them has a guy that matters. Not one. You think you mattered?"

Amadeo is shaking. "You shouldn't have come here. You think you have a right to just barge in my house and make yourself at home."

Angel's eyes widen, and then she narrows them once more. Slowly, enunciating every word, she says, "*It's not your house.*"

Amadeo thumps the table with his fist and retreats to his room.

That evening, the phone rings, and Angel calls to him, "Dad?"

When Amadeo comes out of his room, his pulse throbs in his neck, and he avoids her eyes as he takes the phone. Someone mutters a blessing and hangs up without identifying himself. It takes a moment for Amadeo to recognize the priest. The priest will spend tomorrow at home; he said his Mass this evening, and can have no part in what happens on Calvario. Amadeo replaces the receiver. He wonders if the priest can sense Amadeo failing everyone.

Angel has heated a sausage pizza for dinner. She's already in her spot on the couch, eating. She raises her plate. "Dinner? Dairy, meat, grain, vegetable. All four groups." Her voice is conciliatory.

Amadeo considers sitting next to his daughter and trying to eat, but he isn't hungry, and he has to practice. There is so little time left.

In the bathroom he works on his Christ face, but his downturned mouth and drooping eyes are mawkish and ridiculous. Through the pink polyester lace at the window, he sees Manuel García in his lawn chair, and he tries to picture how it will be tomorrow, the hermanos all dressed up, everyone watching Amadeo Padilla pretend he has what it takes to be Jesus.

When the screen door slams, Amadeo watches from the window as Angel picks her way in bare feet down the drive to where Manuel García sits, gazing at the house. She hands the old man a paper plate: the leftover pizza. Amadeo cannot see the old man's face under his hat, but he's saying something. She waves him off dismissively and turns away.

Manuel says something else, and she stops, turns, walks back to him. She looks angry, glances at the house, and for a moment Amadeo wonders if she's going to betray him to Manuel, tell the old man everything he's done: left her to rental after rental, money always tight, the long series of Marissa's boyfriends—some worse even than Amadeo—around his daughter.

But she doesn't say anything, just shakes her head slowly and is still.

She stands before Manuel in her bare feet. The old man sets the paper plate in the dirt beside his chair, then gestures, impatient. She takes a step closer. Her face is stony; she looks away from Manuel to, it seems, a spot across the road in the Romeros' yard. Manuel leans forward.

Amadeo is still watching when his daughter lifts her shirt above her belly, then higher.

Her breasts are too big for the black lace bra, her maternity jeans low. Her belly glows red in the sunset, impossibly round and swollen. Amadeo sees her belly button protruding and remembers the same thing with Angel's mother, how toward the end he'd tongue the lump of it while he touched her down there.

Angel doesn't blink.

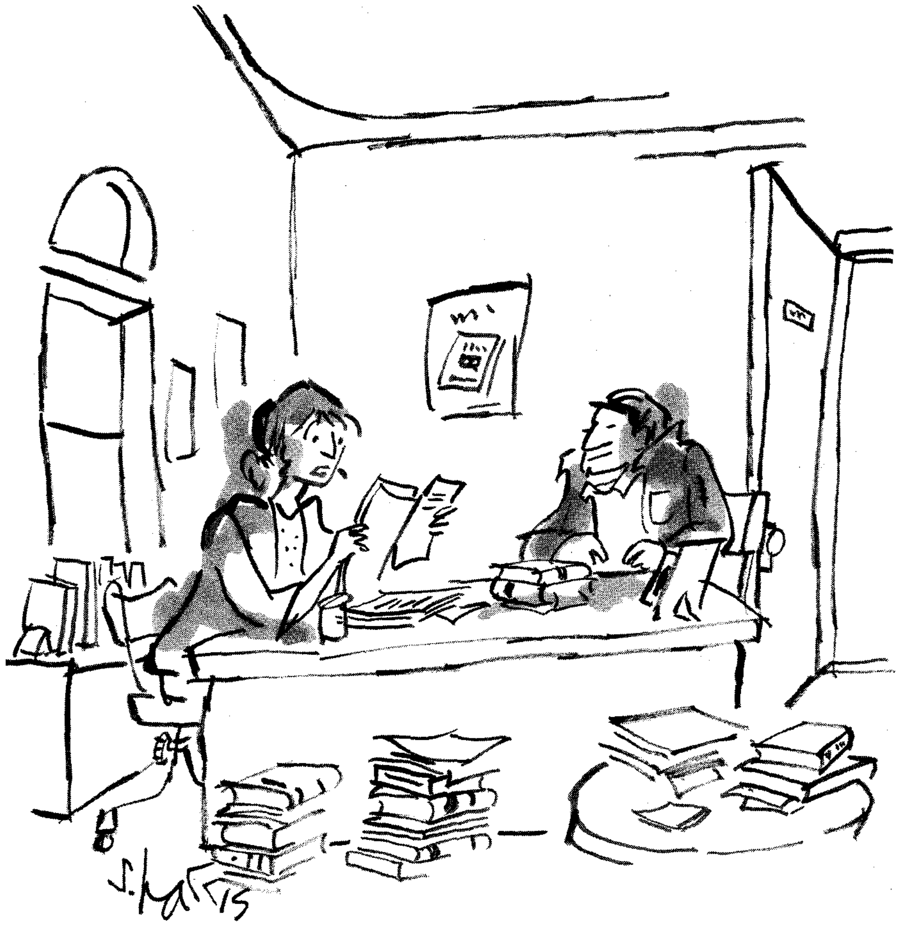
Manuel extends a gnarled brown hand, places it against her belly. Reaches out with the other. Cups her belly in both his hands, moves them over the surface of it. Angel stares at the Romeros' yard.

Amadeo could go outside now, put a stop to the terrible thing that is happening, but he stays, one hand touching the pink lace. His legs are weak. When the old man closes his eyes, so does Amadeo.

On this last night, Amadeo is supposed to stay awake, walking outside through the Garden of Gethsemane, thinking about his soul and about salvation. He is supposed to fast, to steel himself, to be betrayed, to hear the cock's crow. In houses all over town, hermanos are on their knees, leather thongs bound around their thighs, murmuring about suffering and gratitude, yearning for pain.

But Amadeo focusses on the sick sensation of his dick in his jeans, on willing it to shrivel up and fall off as the scene replays in his head: Manuel's hands on his daughter's body. Pacing the length of his room, he finishes a six-pack, then moves on to the next, and the image still won't dissolve.

The television is off, the house si-



"*We've never published anything by a Pearl Harbor denier before.*"

lent. In the living room, Angel sits on the couch, staring at the wall. She doesn't look up at him. "He's not gonna tell. You can have your Jesus day."

"I never asked you to do that. I never asked you for nothing." His voice wavers.

Angel sighs. "It doesn't matter."

He can't tell if she believes this or if she is saying it for him, and he doesn't know which is worse.

Angel points the remote at the TV, and the bright sound of a commercial floods the room. "Just forget about it, O.K.?"

"I never asked you to do that." It's a plea, too quiet to hear over the sound of the television. Amadeo realizes he's drunk.

"We can't be fighting." She pats the couch, glances quickly at him. "Look, it's 'Law and Order.' "

Amadeo hesitates, then drops beside her, grateful, exhausted. He takes a handful of chips when she passes him the bag, thinking about the new feeling swelling in him: he's warm and swaddled, buoyed by forgiveness, suddenly too tired to sleep, too tired to move. They watch the show together, then a second and a third, until Angel goes to bed.

Amadeo wakes to Angel calling him and the sun streaming through the window. Good Friday.

They gather at the base of Apache Peak. Four miles to the top, and Amadeo will walk barefoot, dragging the cross. He trembles and his upper lip sweats, though the morning air is cool.

The hermanos help Tío Tivé unload the cross from the bed of his Ford, three of them sharing the weight. All the Lenten preparations are for this: the hermanos have washed their white pants, braided their disciplinas the old way, from the thick fibres of yucca leaves, mended rips in the black hoods they will wear to insure their humility in this reënactment. When the pito sounds three times—the cock's crow—Tío Tivé steps forward, Pontius Pilate giving his sign, and the hermanos seize Amadeo.

It starts as acting, soft punches, and then they're slugging him, tearing at him, shouting the worst curses of two languages and two thousand years. Amadeo splutters and cries out under the barrage, surprised that it is actually happening.

When they fall back, Tío Tivé places the crown of thorns on Amadeo's head. Amadeo turns and hoists the enormous cross onto his right shoulder, stooping under the weight, and the procession starts. The hermanos walk in two lines behind Jesus and begin to whip themselves. Manuel García follows, bearing no load except his own hands, and then the women and children, the bright clattering colors of them, so distinct from the neat dark and white of the hermanos. Amadeo cannot see her, but he knows Angel is there.

By the second mile, the cross grows heavy. He tries to get into the part. He was up all night, he tells himself, in the garden, crying out to God. He remembers to stagger: his first fall. The crown of thorns is pulled tight, so it pierces the skin at his temple, the stinging sweat slides down, but Amadeo is just not feeling it. He's too heavy and slow, his brain hung over and filled with static.

Angel comes up alongside her father on the right, panting in her sneakers and tank top. "Shoot. I can't believe I'm hiking at eight months. This must be a record." She pats her belly. "Your mama's breaking the Guinness world record, baby." She swigs water, holds the bottle out to Amadeo. "Want some water? I got water."

Amadeo shakes his head fiercely and heaves the cross up the slope after him, wishing she'd leave him alone, wishing he didn't owe her. He can pay her back, but only if he can blot her out.

Manuel García hobbles his way up the procession on the left, huffing and stinking like a dying man. Amadeo stumbles; Manuel García wheezes laughter. The old man will turn back—he'll have to turn back—and leave the day to Amadeo.

Manuel leers past Amadeo at Angel and spits, "Puta."

Angel looks up, startled, then to Amadeo. "Dad—"

Rage wells in him—Amadeo nearly drops the cross and bludgeons the old man—but then turns inward. He calls between heavy breaths to the hooded men behind him, "Whip me!" And then, because they do not respond, louder, "Whip me!"

When the lashes come, Angel clamps her hands over her mouth. She looks as if she might be sick.

Amadeo grinds the soles of his feet into the sharp stones, scrapes his shoulder under the edge of the cross. He feels the rough wood break skin, the hot blood rise, his own blood, his own heat. He must leave his body, become something else.

Manuel laughs so hard he begins to cough, spits in the dirt under Amadeo's bare feet. Suddenly it comes to Amadeo: this mockery is a gift! The filthy old man is playing his part and doesn't even know it. Amadeo laughs out loud, tears streaming down his cheeks. He's getting stronger on Manuel García's mockery!

And Angel isn't a distraction—she's the *point!* Everything Jesus did He did for his children!

"Get away from me," Angel yells at Manuel. Her eyes redden and well with angry tears. "Leave me alone!"

"Just wait," Amadeo whispers, but she doesn't hear.

His second fall is not intentional; neither is his third. He has forgotten to pick up his feet, and he stumbles over a numb knot of foot, the cross crashing down with him. Angel kneels beside him, her eyes worried, Manuel forgotten. "You gotta have water." She opens the little plastic top and pushes the bottle into his hands, but he doesn't take it.

In the brush, birds chirp and little lizards dart, then freeze, from rock to rock. He watches Angel follow one with her eyes. Inside her, the baby twists and turns—he can almost sense it—hot in her flesh and under the sun. For the first time he's glad she's here: more than anyone, he realizes, she's the one he wants with him today.

At the top of Calvario, the hermanos

lift the cross from his shoulders and rest it on the ground. Amadeo straightens, and the word "good" thrums in his head with each step: *good, good, good.* The hermanos help him down, position his arms along the crossbeam, his feet against the block of wood that is all he'll have to stand on. Amadeo spreads his arms and looks up into wide blue sky; there is nothing in his vision but blue. As they bind his arms and legs against the wood, lines once memorized surface: *With a word He stilled the wind and the waves.* But the wind skates over his body, drying the sweat and blood at his temples.

Then the hermanos lift the top of the cross, and Amadeo's vision swings from sky to earth. Upright, his weight returns; his torn heels press into the wooden block. Below him, on the highway, a few glittering cars move slowly, oblivious. The hot air tastes of salt, and dust sticks in his throat.

Angel stands before him, holding her hands under her belly. *The nails, the nails.* He is not sure if he says it or thinks it. But Tío Tivé nods as if this was what he expected and reaches into his pocket for the paper bag. A hooded hermano steps onto a stool and pours rubbing alcohol over the wood and Amadeo's hot hands. The alcohol burns cold and smells sharp and clean.

This is the moment they've been waiting for, and the people crowd closer. Parents nudge their children to the front, turn their babies to face the cross. These children will remember this their whole lives. Perhaps one of them, one day, will make the town proud.

For now, though, the people are proud of themselves, because they were right about this Christ. True, a few of the onlookers might have hoped for a more artistic arrangement of blood, but no one can deny that he looks awful up there; he is exhausted. The man has put himself through Hell for them. Flies land on Amadeo's cheeks and neck, and—mira—he's too tired even to shake them away.

The Mayor Hermano cleans each nail. Alcohol splashes into the dust. Someone in the crowd thinks, This is like our time on earth, just a splash, then we rise into Heaven. The Mayor Hermano wipes each nail with his white handkerchief, then hands them one by one to the other hermanos. The people's hearts fill with joy for Amadeo, glad it's his uncle who will do this for him. Family is important.

Some of the people watch Manuel García. They hope he doesn't feel too bad, but really it's time, and the old man has rested long enough on his laurels. Manuel García's back is to Amadeo. He gazes down the hill he's just climbed.

One or two of the people glance over their shoulders at Angel, to see how she's taking it, to see if she's proud of her daddy, to see if some of the bad girl is getting washed out of her. But her face is blank, and she's standing there with her hands dangling dumbly at her sides, her big cheap belly hanging low.

Amadeo hadn't expected fear, but here it is, hammering in his heart. What he sees from up here are eyes, and though he knows these people, knows all their names, they are like the eyes of strangers. He sees the back of Manuel's head and knows that the old man won't turn around. He seeks Angel with his gaze, and when he finds her he rests there. He leans into her across the distance, her body supporting his own. Just wait, he wants to whisper to her. Just wait.

They pound the nail through Amadeo's palm.

In a moment, pain, but for now he thinks, *This is all wrong*, and he has time to clarify the thought. *I am not the Son.* The sky agrees, because it doesn't darken. Amadeo remembers Christ's cry—*My God, why hast thou forsaken me?*—and he knows what is missing. It is Angel who has been forsaken.

All at once he sees her. He is surprised by the naked fear on Angel's face. It is not an expression he knows. And she feels not only fear—Amadeo sees that now—but pain, complete and physical. Nothing he can do will change this, and soon it won't be just her suffering but the baby, too.

Angel cries out and holds her hands aloft, offering them to him. This is when the pain makes its searing flight down his arm and into his heart. Amadeo twists in agony on the cross, and below him the people applaud. ♦

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THE CRITICS

BOOKS

SPY WARS

The real legacy of Soviet spying in America.

BY NICHOLAS LEMANN

Chapman Pincher, the ninety-five-year-old dean of the British intelligence-agency press corps, says that he got his start covering spies in 1946, when, leaving an official tour of a government facility, he happened to sit down on a bus opposite "a small man in a black pin-striped suit and bowler hat." The man was Fred Brundrett, the deputy to Britain's chief defense scientist. Brundrett told Pincher that he had admired a book Pincher had written called "The Breeding of Farm Animals," and he invited Pincher to come see his cattle herd. Before long, Brundrett and other high British defense officials were regularly feeding secret material to Pincher, who, as a defense correspondent for the *Daily Express*, developed a reputation as a conservative, constantly raising the alarm about spying in Britain by the Soviet Union.

In 1960, Pincher was approached by a man named Anatoli Strelnikov, who said that he was a press attaché at the Soviet Embassy in London. Pincher was always looking for information about the Soviets, and eagerly cultivated him. Strelnikov, for his part, wanted to know what Pincher knew about British military intelligence. A series of mutually advantageous meetings followed. But Pincher also asked the government to check up on Strelnikov, and got the unsurprising news that he was a K.G.B. agent. After each of their meetings, Pincher had a cozy lunchtime debriefing with a British intelligence official—from whom, of course, he was hoping to get even more useful information.

Soon, with copious help from his British intelligence sources, Pincher published an exposé in the *Daily Express* about the K.G.B.'s attempts to seduce unsuspecting Brits into relationships like the one that Strelnikov had established with him. After the article appeared, the dauntless Strelnikov took Pincher out to lunch. There, according to Pincher, he waved a thick wad of cash and offered to pay him more than the *Daily Express* was paying him if he'd work for the K.G.B.

Pincher tells these stories in a book called "Treachery: Betrayals, Blunders, and Cover-Ups: Six Decades of Espionage Against America and Great Britain" (Random House; $36), which is meant to be his summary achievement, after eight previous books about spying. Those who have followed his career won't be surprised to learn that Pincher's central preoccupation here is with Sir Roger Hollis, who was the head of the British counter-espionage agency MI5 from 1956 to 1965, and, Pincher reports, a Soviet spy. Pincher first made this accusation in a 1981 book called "Their Trade Is Treachery," and—though his case is far from airtight, full of suppositions in places where you'd want dispositive evidence—he has made it relentlessly ever since.

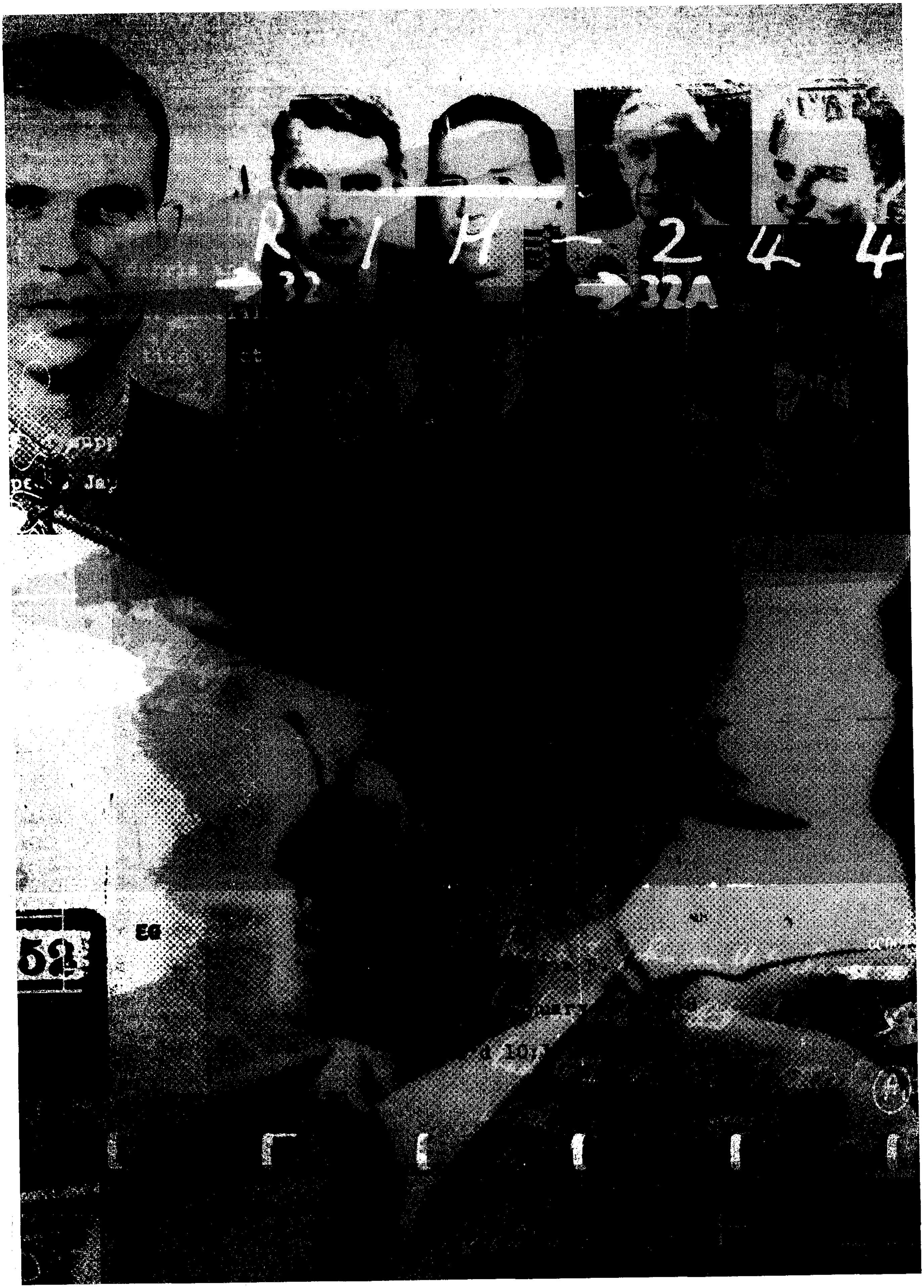
The Roger Hollis strand in Pincher's career began three decades ago, when his friend Lord Rothschild, the private banker and MI5 official, dispatched a chauffeured car to bring Pincher to his house in Cambridge to meet a mysterious guest he called "Philip." This was Peter Wright, who had retired from MI5 and run into severe financial trouble when he started a stud farm for Arabian horses in Tasmania. Wright hoped to raise money by publishing a book full of sensational revelations about Soviet spies in Britain, including Hollis, which he would call "The Cancer in Our Midst." But, aging and weak, he had run out of steam. With Lord Rothschild as the broker, Pincher stepped in, the book became "Their Trade Is Treachery," and Wright, his anonymity protected, got a five-thousand-pound payment from Pincher out of the proceeds from the book.

The partnership quickly soured, though. In 1984, Wright—having, according to Pincher, turned into "a self-deluding pantomime character sporting a ridiculous drover's hat, ravaged by illness, greed, and lust for revenge"—stopped speaking to Pincher, and wrote his own book, "Spycatcher," which wound up being much more successful than "Their Trade Is Treachery." Finally, Wright revealed his arrangement with Pincher and Lord Rothschild, which led to the two being investigated for misconduct. Wright even accused Pincher of being an agent for both MI5 and the K.G.B.

In the realm of what spies call "humint"—human intelligence—the whole truth is nearly impossible to establish. Information comes from sources who are never entirely reliable. They have ideological and financial agendas, they have complicated double and triple loyalties, they almost never have the complete picture, they can disinform and lie and self-promote. Nor are "spy" and "agent" neatly defined occupational categories. Much human-intelligence activity never gets put down on paper, or at least not in an easily interpretable form, and much or most never finds its way into conventional open-access archives. It's not just that the truth about spying is unusually indeterminate; there is indeterminacy about just what one would want the truth about: who the spies were, why they spied, or what their spying accomplished.

In the United States, only a portion of the government records about Soviet spying are public. But after the fall of the Soviet Union there was a brief, wild period when Boris Yeltsin's advisers were making archival-access-for-money deals. In 1993, a New York publisher, Crown, negotiated exclusive access to K.G.B. files

[illegible] OPPOSITE: ALEX WILLIAMSON



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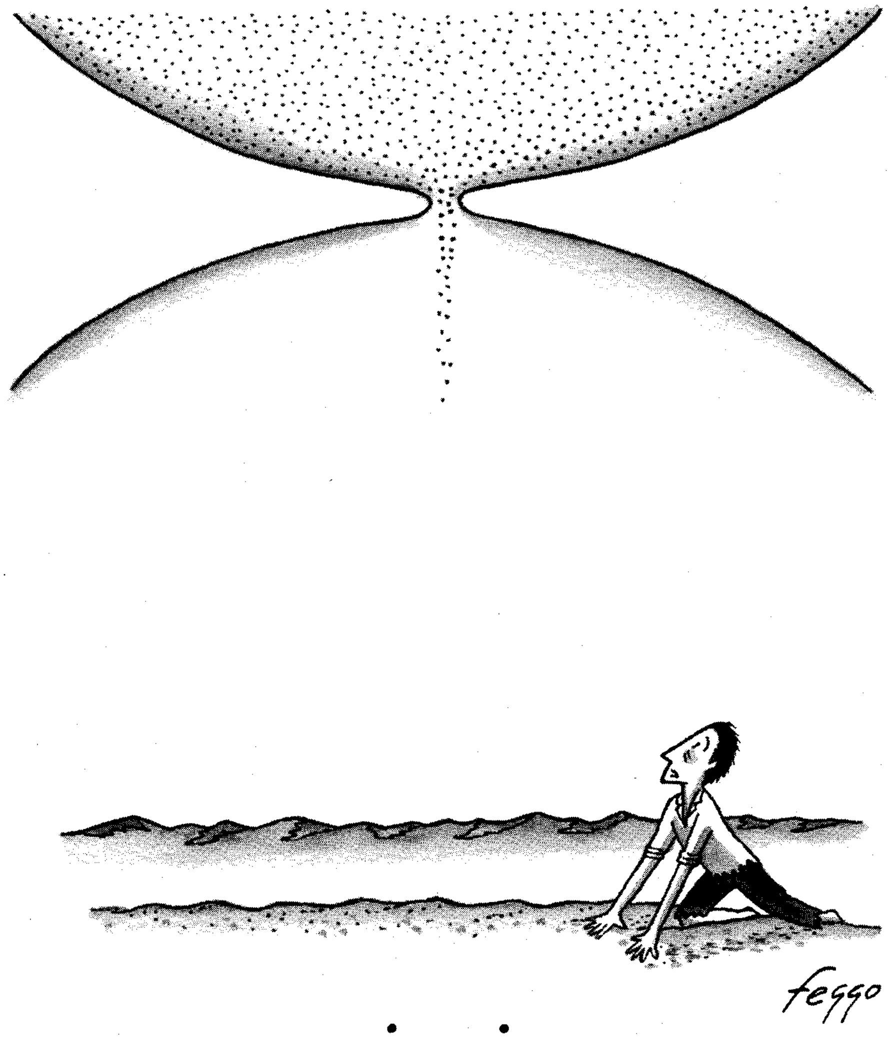
Spies who captivated the popular imagination, as villains or as martyrs, didn't always have much strategic importance.



for a series of five books. For one of them, which was to be about Soviet spying in the United States, a journalist and former K.G.B. employee named Alexander Vassiliev went to the K.G.B. archives to gather material. His collaborator was Allen Weinstein, an American historian best known for a 1978 book called "Perjury," which concluded that Alger Hiss had indeed been a Soviet spy. From 1994 to 1996, Vassiliev worked in the archives, though not in a conventional way. He was not allowed to make photocopies, only to take handwritten notes; the archives were haphazardly organized and not entirely open; he had to spend time pursuing queries from Weinstein, who does not speak Russian, instead of relying on his own judgment about which records to examine; and, eventually, his relationship with the keepers of the historical material deteriorated. By 1996, the delicate set of arrangements that had made Vassiliev's archival work possible had fallen apart, and, having filled eight notebooks, he decided to leave Russia and move to London.

Vassiliev had left his notebooks behind when he made his departure, fearing that they would be confiscated. So the book that he and Weinstein published, in 1999, "The Haunted Wood," drew upon "draft chapters" that Vassiliev had written in Moscow and submitted for clearance to a body called the Declassification Commission, supplemented by information that he had surreptitiously passed on to Weinstein, some floppy disks he smuggled out of Russia, and a few copies of original documents.

Soon the fiery Vassiliev was caught up in the endless battle over the Hiss case. He had a falling out with Weinstein, because, he writes, Weinstein used material from their collaboration in a revised edition of "Perjury" before "The Haunted Wood" was published. In 2001, he filed two libel suits, in London, in response to nasty remarks (one of them in a reader review on Amazon.com) that John Lowenthal, an outspoken defender of Hiss, made about "The Haunted Wood." While preparing for the cases to come to trial—both were ultimately unsuccessful—he was able to get a contact in Moscow to ship him the notebooks he had left behind five years earlier. In 2005, two years after getting the verdicts in his suits, he looked up Alger Hiss on Wikipedia, and through one of the links found out about John Earl Haynes, a historian at the Library of Congress, and Harvey Klehr, a historian at Emory University, who had jointly published several books about Soviet espionage. He e-mailed Haynes, and soon the three of them were talking about collaborating on a book based on the notebooks.

The result of this collaboration is "Spies: The Rise and Fall of the K.G.B. in America" (Yale; $35), which, since nobody has been back in the K.G.B. archives since Vassiliev left them, in 1996, is based on the same material as "The Haunted Wood" was, ten years earlier. Either because he was holding out on Allen Weinstein or because Weinstein wasn't asking him the right questions or because he really needed those eight notebooks in hand, Vassiliev has managed to produce from his time in the K.G.B. archives yet another book full of what seem to be important new revelations.

Internet searching provides a daily reminder of what has always been true about dealing with a mass of information: what you find depends greatly on what you are looking for. If you're interested in the history of Soviet spying in America, there are at least three possible ways to organize an archival search. You can focus on cases of special interest to Americans. You can focus, strategically, on what was actually important in advancing Soviet interests. Or you can take the archives as they are.

It's clear why certain cases have stirred up passions among Americans. Alger Hiss went on trial and then to prison; Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were tried and executed. Both cases riveted the country's attention, and, at least within a small circle, their stories have had an amazing staying power. Starting in 2001, more than fifty years after Hiss's first trial, New York University has hosted an impressively well-organized and well-staffed Web site devoted to the Hiss case (in particular, to proclaiming Hiss's innocence). Then, there are cases like that of the journalist I. F. Stone, whose heroic stature on the left makes the right especially eager to expose him as a K.G.B. stooge.

Vassiliev, in his introduction to "Spies," says that as late as 1990 he had never heard the name Alger Hiss. That's evidence not of his cluelessness—as a journalist and former spook, he was hardly untutored in the subject of espionage—but of Hiss's relative unimportance if you're looking at the record in the second way, strategically. From that perspective, the main questions are how extensive the Soviet spy network was, how it was organized, what it was looking for, how long it lasted, and what it found that was valuable to the Soviet Union.

Finally, one can take archival material as it is, and attend to its own emphases and quirks. In the archives of any decent-sized organization, an unfiltered record will show institutional life in all its boredom and inefficiency. Most initiatives fail. Internal competition trumps external goals. People are petty, whiny, and unmanageable. Somehow this seems axiomatic if the organization is one's own, but not if the organization—whether it's the K.G.B., Apple Computer, or the Obama White House—seems inaccessible, powerful, and effective.

"Spies," which limits itself to Soviet espionage activity in the U.S. during the nineteen-thirties and forties, has elements of all three ways of searching. It is organized around items of particular American interest, but it also addresses the question of what use the Soviet Union was able to make of its spy networks. And the book's freshest and most compelling parts are the ones that suggest some of the quotidian texture of the espionage operation.

In 1995, a government commission chaired by Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan ordered the release of the single largest collection of material from the Soviet intelligence apparatus: intercepted cables that were decoded by an American-British project called Venona. (An earlier book by Haynes and Klehr is about this material.) Many people thought that the Venona records would settle the argument about Alger Hiss forever, but they didn't, because most K.G.B. records referred to American sources by code names—so the argument became about whether the source the K.G.B. called "Ales" was actually Hiss.

Vassiliev, however, found Hiss's real name in the documents he looked at. "The Haunted Wood" quotes a few such documents, and "Spies" quotes more. The book's first chapter is called "Alger Hiss: Case Closed." (To believe that Hiss was innocent, one now must believe not only that "Ales" was somebody else but also that—as D. D. Guttenplan, the author of a comprehensive and admiring new biography of I. F. Stone, hinted recently, in a long essay in *The Nation*—Vassiliev's notes are faked.) But it's still hard to tell exactly what Hiss was doing for the Soviets. That's because, as is evident from "Spies," he was working with the G.R.U., the Soviet military-intelligence agency, not the K.G.B.; some of the relevant material in Vassiliev's notes consists of K.G.B. officials' envious grumbling about the good luck of "the neighbors" in having a source so high up in the State Department.

According to "Spies," Vassiliev's notebooks name more than five hundred Americans who had private dealings with Soviet intelligence. The Woodrow Wilson Center, in Washington, D.C., an affiliate of the Smithsonian, has posted the full text of the notebooks on its Web site, so interested parties can look them all up. The book itself discusses dozens of people, rather than hundreds, and focusses heavily on the marquee names. It exonerates Robert Oppenheimer, the chief scientist on the Manhattan Project, as someone the Soviets wanted badly to recruit but could not. (He lost his security clearance in 1954.) It adds material on Julius Rosenberg, who was less an "atomic spy"—his Homeric epithet in nineteen-fifties newspaper headlines—than the chief organizer of one of the Soviets' most wide-reaching American networks. It reveals that Ernest Hemingway had five meetings with K.G.B. operatives over the years but was never successfully recruited. And it unreservedly declares I. F. Stone to have been "a Soviet spy."

Since the release of the Venona material, the controversy in Stone's case, as in Hiss's, has been mainly about whom a K.G.B. alias—in this case "Blin" (Russian for "pancake")—refers to. Here "Spies" presents a smoking gun: a 1936 reference identifying Blin as the *Post* journalist Isadore Feinstein, which was Stone's name before he changed it, the following year.

The problem is that the book sets the bar for being a "spy" or an "agent" awfully low. It doesn't establish that Stone was paid or had more than occasional contact with the K.G.B. In some of its examples, Stone is using K.G.B. personnel as sources for his own work; in another, Stone is passing on what must have been widely known journalistic gossip about a Hearst correspondent's dissatisfaction with his boss; in the most damning, Stone is conveying messages to and from another of the K.G.B.'s American contacts. By this standard, Chapman Pincher, given all those conversations with Anatoli Strelnikov, might have qualified as a Soviet agent. So might Walter Lippmann, the arch-establishment Washington columnist, who, "Spies" tells us, had regular, chatty, information-sharing meetings with Vladimir Pravdin, a K.G.B. agent thinly disguised as a correspondent for the Soviet news agency TASS. But "Spies" assures us that "there was no chance that the K.G.B. could recruit Walter Lippmann as a source" (though it did recruit Lippmann's secretary). Haynes, Klehr, and Vassiliev seem to have let Stone's softness toward the Soviet Union—and the ardor of his defenders—enter the courtroom.

The United States gave the Soviet Union diplomatic recognition in 1933. This allowed the Soviets to set up offices here that could serve as bases of operations for K.G.B. agents, who then went about setting up their networks of American helpers. "Spies" conveys, in passing, some of the tedium of this work. Agents tried to blend into American life inconspicuously, which couldn't have been easy, and to meet people. If all went well, they would rendezvous with recruits in public places, and confirm each other's identity by exchanging prearranged bits of banal dialogue ("What is the way to the China Town?").

Many of the Americans whom the K.G.B. worked with were peculiar, trying people. An agent named Tasso Black "kept mice, rats, and snakes in his home, as well as a pet crow," the F.B.I. reported when it caught up with him, in 1950. Martha Dodd, the daughter of the American Ambassador to Germany, had a long conversation with her K.G.B. handler in 1941 that left him at his wits' end. "Seemingly she spent most [of] her time in bed," he reported to his superiors. "In addition to the Russian or Russians, she slept with a full-blown fascist—General Ernest Udet, second in command (next to Goering) of the German air force; Louis Ferdinand, grandson of the Kaiser; and some guy in the French Embassy in Berlin.... She asked me if it was now a rule that people in our work were not to have a sexual life."

Often, agents would drift out of contact or come under suspicion of having gone over to the other side. Such cases required surveillance, which, from the passages Vassiliev copies, sounds mind-numbingly dull: "C. left his house to go to the meeting with L. at 18:00. From 19:00 to 19:30 he was in the Brooklyn maternity ward, where his wife was staying. From there—to the Turkish baths on 46th Street, where he stayed until 21:40. After that, he checked out in a taxi, on the subway, and in courtyards on 24th Street. At 23:00, he went into the drug-store and saw L.'s wife. She was buying cotton balls. When she saw C., she went outside. C. drank a cup of coffee and went out as well."

"Spies" points out that the unglamorous heart of the K.G.B.'s American operation was industrial espionage, conducted in electronics, aviation, chemical, and communications companies. The K.G.B.'s American helpers were more often private-sector engineers than government officials. The really good stuff from government officials was often the contents of someone's in-box, as in:

> 5.1.45—Contents of a draft by Morgenthau's department [Treasury] with Allied policies with regard to neutral countries.
>
> 6.1.45—Draft instructions from the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces of the USA/England/(USSR)—control of German foodstuffs and agriculture.
>
> 8.1.45—On a conversation between Taylor and the Legal Counsel of the Polish government in London, Kulsky, about Poland's attitude to postwar Germany and about Sov.-Polish relations.

Or else it was very high-grade gossip, the kind of stuff that Washington insiders who don't work in government often know:

> The info. Received this time from R. ["Ruff" / Neumann] amounts to the following:
>
> . . . The Duke of Alba . . . met with generals and industrialists who said they were willing to meet with Hitler and Mussolini and make a deal with the Allies. . . .
>
> [Archbishop Francis] Spellman traveled to the Vatican with the intention of recruiting the Pope on the Allied side. The latter declared that the Allies must stop bombing civilian populations.

It's hard to tell from "Spies" how valuable all this information was to the Soviets. That is partly because the historical record is still so sketchy, and partly because Haynes, Klehr, and Vassiliev, in their different ways (Vassiliev writes that he considers the Soviet spies to have been "heroes"), are inclined to focus more on the extent of the networks than on assessing their worth. The K.G.B.'s single most valuable asset was surely Klaus Fuchs, the German-born physicist who worked on both the British and the American atomic-bomb projects at a high level (much higher than did Julius Rosenberg's brother-in-law, David Greenglass, who was a mere machinist). "Spies" baldly states that the Soviets' detonation of a nuclear bomb in 1949 was "a dramatic demonstration of the greatest triumph of Soviet intelligence." That's not a settled point among historians, but "Spies" is always drawn to the strongest possible inference. In second place to Fuchs, to judge from "Spies," was William Weisband, a code clerk who, in 1948, seems to have told the Soviets about the Venona project, bringing an end to the message traffic that the Americans and the British had been intercepting. The book's largest claim for the importance of Soviet espionage is that the combination of having the bomb and cutting off the Americans' supply of information helped encourage Joseph Stalin to give North Korea the go-ahead to invade South Korea in 1950. This is a defensible, but not a universal, interpretation.

By 1950, after Alger Hiss was convicted and Senator Joseph McCarthy made his first incendiary charges about Communists inside the government, the K.G.B.'s agents in the United States were no longer producing much valuable material. The golden age of Soviet espionage in the United States had ended in 1945, with the defection to the F.B.I. of Elizabeth Bentley, who with her lover Jacob Golos had run the most extensive Soviet spy network.

One of the main challenges of historical imagination is trying to understand how smart people in the past could have been wildly—and, by contemporary standards, obviously—wrong, and what's hardest to grasp about the K.G.B.'s American helpers in the late thirties and early forties is their motivation. Unlike latter-day Soviet spies, such as Aldrich Ames, they seem not, for the most part, to have been in it for the money; in many cases they were not paid at all. Typically, they were true believers in Soviet Communism. Yet the Soviet Union made little pretense of being a free and open democracy. Even Walter Duranty's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Times* series on the Soviet Union back in 1931—now notorious for its admiring tone—made it perfectly clear that Stalin was a cruel, brutal tyrant, and reported that he was removing five million kulaks (relatively prosperous peasants) from their land and deporting them to parts unknown, so that they could be " 'liquidated' or melted in the hot fire of exile and labor into the proletariat mass." How, during the heyday of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, could anyone have found Stalin's regime preferable?

It's true that many people in the K.G.B.'s network joined up before the Moscow show trials of the late nineteen-thirties and the Nazi-Soviet pact of 1939, and it's true that the Americans and the Soviets were allies during the Second World War. But the conditions that led some Americans to admire the Soviet Union in the thirties are actually more difficult and interesting. Our contemporary template of universal political morality—human rights, democracy, freedom—was not yet in place. Meeting basic material needs on a mass scale seemed much more compelling, and so did the idea of a whole new kind of society that transcended petty individualism.

As late as 1944, we can have a scene like this one: Theodore Hall, a brilliant teen-age physicist working on the Manhattan Project, goes to the apartment of Sergey Kurnakov, a Soviet military journalist, hands him an unsolicited report on the building of the atomic bomb at Los Alamos, to be passed back to Moscow, and (in Kurnakov's summary) announces that "he is troubled by the idea that when Communism has made everyone's life good, people will lose the incentive to fight, and their interests will be reduced to the level of small-scale personal ambitions. In short—people will go into spiritual atrophy when nothing is left to 'save' a mankind that has already been saved."

Kurnakov asked Hall why he was passing the most sensitive American military secrets to the Soviets. "He replied: The S.U. is the only country that could be trusted with such a terrible thing. But since we cannot take it away from other countries—the USSR ought to be aware of its existence and stay abreast of the progress of experiments and construction. This way, at a peace conference, the USSR—on which the fate of my generation depends—will not find itself in the position of a power subjected to blackmail."

The enduring fascination with what is, rationally, a small part of the history of Soviet-American relations can't be explained by whatever material the spies produced. The fascination is with the spies themselves. The fierce arguments about Soviet espionage are barely disguised arguments about the Red Scare of the fifties—whether it was irrational and hysterical or justified and protective. Even with the Cold War long over, the debate has bite. A book like "Spies" supports a conservative view: America inhabits a world full of dangerous enemies, and liberals are incapable of understanding this. President Bush's "global war on terror" implicitly tapped into a wellspring of such conservative conviction. When Bush, in his second term as President, appointed Allen Weinstein archivist of the United States, it sent a message. Bush isn't President anymore, but these issues have hardly been put to rest. Although Barack Obama has steered away from hot-blooded rhetoric about America's enemies, he knows that our political culture is quick to charge liberals with a perilous naïveté about bad guys from abroad.

As for the extent of Soviet spying, Weinstein, Haynes, Klehr, and others are right to say that their case has been supported by most of the evidence that has emerged since the Soviet Union collapsed. But the record is still hugely incomplete. Much of what we do have is material from sources who were unreliable in the first place, filtered through bureaucracies with their own interests, and brought to us courtesy of present-day sources, like Alexander Vassiliev, who are themselves complicated characters. Espionage never ceases to be compelling, because it has the indeterminacy of life itself. ♦

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The Book Bench, a literary blog.

BRIEFLY NOTED

The Selected Works of T. S. Spivet, *by Reif Larsen (Penguin Press; $27.95).* The eponymous hero of this first novel is a twelve-year-old boy obsessed with charting the minutiae of his life on an isolated ranch in Montana. (Topics include the timing and duration of his father's sips of whiskey; the components of a sandwich compared with those of sound.) His accurately rendered illustrations of beetles, maps of the sewer system in Washington, D.C., and the changing coastline of the United States draw the attention of the Smithsonian Institution, which, mistaking him for an adult, offers him a prestigious award. Larsen gives his character serious problems—the accidental death of his brother, a fraught relationship with his parents—but, by the time T.S. stumbles upon a secret society that believes the Midwest is riddled with time-altering wormholes, the whimsical story has all the heft of a feather.

Hello Goodbye, *by Emily Chenoweth (Random House; $25).* Chenoweth's poised début takes what could be a maudlin subject—a mother dying of cancer, a husband and an adolescent daughter trying to manage their grief—and makes it feel sharp and surprising. Elliott is the headmaster of a shabby private school in Ohio; his wife, Helen, is a juvenile-court counsellor. When a doctor tells Elliott that his wife has a terminal brain tumor, he plans a vacation at a grand New England hotel, acting on the premise that "there was nothing you could do, and yet you could not do nothing." Old friends are invited, for what they learn will be their final visit with Helen, but neither she nor her daughter, Abby, is told how sick Helen really is. Chenoweth writes with a restraint that allows minor gestures to become elegantly weighted with meaning.

Germany 1945, *by Richard Bessel (Harper; $28.99).* In the months after the fall of the Third Reich, Bessel writes, "the entire country seemed to be waiting for a train." Bessel does an excellent job of evoking the blasted landscape of a conquered Germany—the homelessness and the hunger, the rubble and the mass rape. (Among the book's fascinating details: Allied soldiers were told to look for insurgents with "belts filled with explosives," who never emerged; a common postwar crime was bigamy.) There was also, belatedly, disillusionment. Nazi leaders had sacrificed or abandoned their own civilians, underscoring the "obvious bankruptcy of National Socialism." Germans dissolved into pools of self-pity—which, remarkably, helped lay the foundation (at least in the West) for a democratic and pacifist state. Bessel fully recognizes the repugnance that the Germans' sense of victimhood and their amnesia about their culpability provokes; and yet, he notes, their eagerness to put Nazism behind them and make "a fundamental break with the past" was "no bad thing."

The Marvelous Hairy Girls, *by Merry Wiesner-Hanks (Yale; $30).* In 1547, a gift arrived at the Paris court of Henry II and Catherine de Medici: a ten-year-old boy named Petrus Gonzales, from Tenerife, whose genetic condition left him covered with hair (in the words of one witness) "of a light blond color and very delicate and fine, like the fur of a sable, and it smells good." Gonzales was added to a royal entourage of "oddities" and brought up as a courtier. He eventually married, and five of his seven children (including the three hirsute daughters of the title) inherited the condition. The family became popular with painters, scientists, and lovers of curiosities throughout Europe. Wiesner-Hanks uses her subjects to explore Renaissance notions of the marvellous and the miraculous, but a scarcity of sources leaves a void at the center of her portrait: we learn much of what the Gonzales family might have meant to others but little of what they made of their own experiences.

DANCING

WALKING ON THE MOON

Michael Jackson in motion.

BY JOAN ACOCELLA

Jackson performing on tour, in the summer of 1981. Photograph by Todd Gray.

BEFORE HE WAS KING"/CHRONICLE BOOKS

If you watch a video of the Jackson 5 performing "I Want You Back," on the Ed Sullivan show, in 1969, you will see that the group's lead vocalist—Michael, the youngest of the five brothers—was already an A-list dancer at the age of eleven. Here is this fat-cheeked boy, in a pink Super Fly hat that he is obviously proud of, doing tilts and dips and fanny rocks and finger snaps, and tucking in little extras—half steps, quarter steps—between them. Most amazing is his musicality, his ability to respond to the score faithfully and yet creatively, playing with the music, moving in before and after the beat. Musicality always comes off as spontaneity, and he was loved, early on, for that quality.

Now turn to "Don't Stop 'Til You Get Enough" (1979). Ten years have passed. He has started recording his own songs. He does fancier steps. But at twenty-one, as at eleven, he is galvanizing above all because of his naturalness. He hops with joy; he wags his head; his shirt comes untucked.

Then come the landmark videos of the early nineteen-eighties: "Billie Jean," "Beat It," and "Thriller," all of them for songs that appeared on the collection "Thriller" (1982), which is the best-selling album of all time. At this point, Jackson has just about everything you would want in a dancer. He is very fast, and, now that the adult musculature has come in, his whole body is "worked." (This means that every muscle is stretched, and operating in the service of the dance. Nothing is blurred.) As a result, he has a sharp attack, and wonderful clarity. Watch him—as you can, for example, in "The Way You Make Me Feel" (1987)—dancing, silhouetted, alongside other men doing the same steps. You can't see the faces, but you know which one he is. He dives into a step more intently, and shows it to us more precisely, than anyone else. Around this time, the videos are featuring some new moves—for example, multiple spins (which seem, at times, to have received technical assistance). And he's now doing the famous moonwalk, which he picked up from break dancing. He has also started doing some rather dirty moves, notably the crotch-grab, which will endure, with striking embellishments, throughout his career.

The "Thriller"-period videos were instrumental in converting MTV from a backwater to a sensation. Jackson consciously aimed at doing that. "I wanted to be a pioneer in this relatively new medium," he said in his 1988 memoir, "Moon Walk" (a book, incidentally, edited by Jacqueline Onassis). He spent a fortune on these projects. The 1995 "Scream" video cost seven million dollars—a record at that time. He didn't like to call these works videos. They were "short films," he claimed—and rightly, for he had them shot not on videotape but on 35-mm. film. "We were serious," he said.

Jackson took his choreography from a number of sources: hip-hop, sock hop, "Soul Train," disco, and jazz dance, plus a little tap and Charleston. By his account, he constructed some of the movement himself. "Billie Jean," he says in "Moon Walk," still had no dance component the night before he was scheduled to perform it in honor of Motown's twenty-fifth anniversary. He went down to the kitchen, turned on the music full blast, and, in his words, "let the dance create itself" on his body. His moonwalk had its début in that number.

But on most of his dances he did not

work alone. Michael Peters, Vincent Paterson, and Jeffrey Daniel, all of them experienced stage and TV choreographers, collaborated with Jackson. On the PBS special "Everybody Dance Now" (1991), in answer to a question from the dance historian Sally Sommer, Peters said that Jackson's method was to put together some steps and ideas and bring them to a choreographer, who would then organize them into a coherent dance.

But, whether he went it alone or got help, the result was much the same. He didn't have a lot of moves. You can almost count them on your fingers: the gyrating hips, the bending knees (reversing from inward to outward), the pivoting feet (ditto), the one raised knee, the spins, and, above all, the rotated or raised heel, which is what he gets around on. These steps are generally done staccato. He finishes the phrase and freezes, then finishes the next phrase and freezes. He also has some moves so natural that one hesitates to call them steps: lovely, light-footed walks, struts, jumps, and runs. He made at least one important innovation in music-video choreography—the use of large ensembles dancing behind the soloist—but beyond that he created very little dancing that was different from his own prior numbers, or anyone else's. Yet many people were happy to see him, again and again, do the thing he did. Long after the critics soured on his music and his videos, they still liked his dancing.

Sometimes they had to take the dancing on faith. Jackson, who had a thorough knowledge of the movie musical, revered Fred Astaire. He records in his memoir how thrilled he was when Astaire praised him. The old master even invited him over to his house, where Jackson taught the moonwalk to him and his choreographer Hermes Pan. (Astaire told Jackson that both of them, he and Jackson, danced out of anger—an interesting remark, at least about Astaire.) But despite Jackson's awe of his predecessor, he never learned the two rules that Astaire, as soon as he gained power over the filming, insisted on: (1) don't interrupt the dance with reaction shots or any other extraneous shots, and (2) favor a full-body shot over a closeup. To Astaire, the dance was primary—his main story—and he had it filmed accordingly. In Jackson's videos, the dance is tertiary, even quaternary (after the song and the story and the filming). The camera repeatedly cuts away, and, when it comes back, it often limits itself to the upper body. Jackson didn't value his dancing enough.

Pop critics often say that with the "Thriller" album, though it came early—he was only twenty-four—Jackson went as far as he ever got musically. The same might be said of the music videos born of this album. The "Thriller" video became part of world culture. On YouTube, you can see a clip of fifteen hundred inmates of the Cebu Provincial Detention and Rehabilitation Center, in the Philippines, doing the "Thriller" dance in unison, in their orange uniforms. (Prison officials thought it would be a good lesson in discipline.) The later videos were not as popular, because they were not as good. Now, in place of dancing and stories, he ramped up the pyrotechnics. Smoke banks enclose him. Great flames shoot up behind him. (Back in 1984, while he was filming a Pepsi commercial, the special effects set his hair on fire. He had to be treated for third-degree burns.) Then come the computer-generated effects: he vanishes, he materializes, he walks on walls. With this abracadabra, good causes, mawkishly treated, make their entry. "Heal the World" (1992) gave us war, and abandoned children sucking their thumbs; "Earth Song" (1995) was about the destruction of the environment. This would have been O.K. if he had gone on dancing, but he didn't, or not much. In one video, he just walked; in another, he just sat; in "Heal the World," he didn't appear. "You Are Not Alone" (1995), the major embarrassment of this late period, shows him as an angel, quite naked, with a vast pair of feathered wings. Needless to say, this ruled out dancing. Many of the late videos are heavy on self-aggrandizement; others, on self-pity. He, too, was sucking his thumb.

Occasionally, though, he would get up off his chair, and then it was like old times. The last known video shows him at a rehearsal for the London season he was about to embark on. He struts, he boogies; he snaps and pops. As CNN's chief medical correspondent, Sanjay Gupta, said, "This doesn't look like someone who's very sick to me." That's not to mention that Jackson was fifty years old and, because he was in rehearsal, was probably not performing "full out." He was still a great dancer. Two days later, he was dead. ◆

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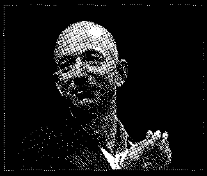
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THE CURRENT CINEMA

GRAY SKIES

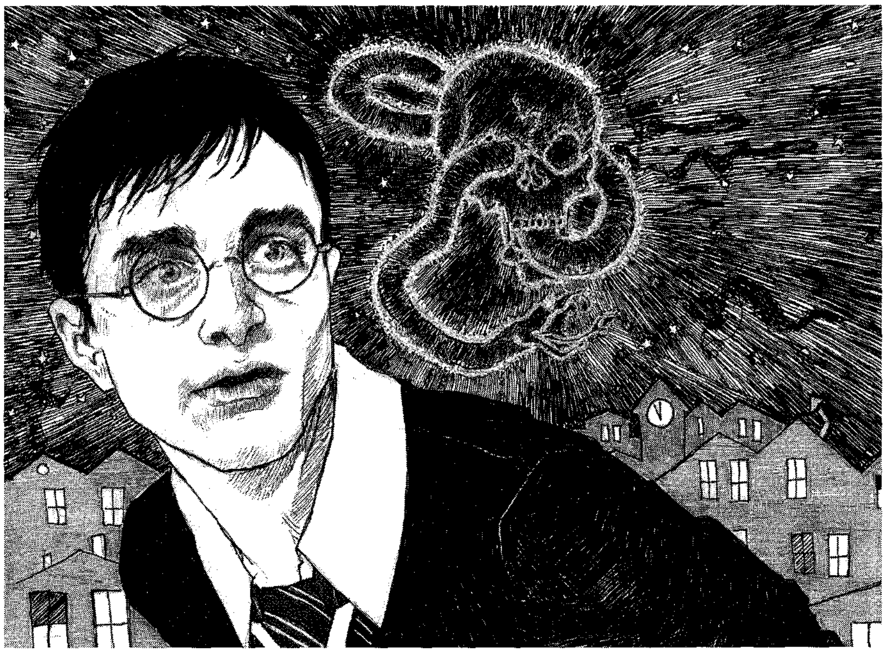
"Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince" and "In the Loop."

BY ANTHONY LANE

The first thing we see in "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince" is the face of the hero (Daniel Radcliffe) filling the screen, looking grim. As a row of flashbulbs goes off, he flinches, like a criminal exposed. The last time we saw anything of this description was a couple of weeks ago, as John Dillinger, in "Public Enemies," flew to Indiana, on a drenching night, and into a similar fusillade. It was the most gorgeous of scenes, from the silvery flanks of the airplane to the magnesium flares of the welcoming throng, and it told us something—that press and public alike had already bought into the mythology in which this hoodlum (in reality, not the most glamorous of souls) had sought to wrap himself. And what of Harry? Well, he has committed no crime, so there's no call for a brooding mug shot. And he's long been a star of the wizard firmament, so there's no reason to drape him in fresh celebrity. In short, we are left to ponder this dour and heavy style, and to wonder what sort of film—and what new trouble with Harry—it foretells.

So what's up in the world of Pottery? Not much, it turns out, except for demented intruders. These come in two flavors. First, there is a team of wraiths who zip and twist through London like high-speed silk, shaking the Millennium Bridge until it falls apart. (This resurrects a joke: it used to be known, with good cause, as the Wobbly Bridge.) We never learn what ordinary citizens—referred to as Muggles—make of such attacks, because, whereas J. K. Rowling's novel began in the office of a bewildered Prime Minister, the film's director, David Yates, never stoops to the level of wizardless lives. As the series has progressed, so the apartheid of magic has taken hold, until now, in the sixth installment, there is not a single mention of, say, the Dursleys of Privet Drive—nothing to distract us from the master race.

The secondary invaders are the hormones now coursing through every corridor in Hogwarts. Ron (Rupert Grint) loves Hermione (Emma Watson); an annoying moll named Lavender (Jessie Cave) loves Ron; the girl who kissed Harry in the last film has been mothballed; and Harry loves Ginny (Bonnie Wright). "Confused? I'd be surprised if you weren't," Professor Dumbledore (Michael Gambon) says, as if replaying an old episode of "Soap." Unless I am mistaken, he himself has a quiet thing for Harry, forever putting an arm around his shoulder. "Wands out, Harry," he commands. The film is fairly nervous about these crushes, eager to show its heroes consumed by the pleadings of desire but equally determined not to contemplate its natural conclusion. "All she wants to do is snog me," Ron says of Lavender, though I couldn't tell whether he is complaining about her constant attentions or ruing her ladylike reluctance to get his wand out and go the distance. There is a telling hint of censure in the editing, as Yates waits for the lips of Harry and Ginny to draw near and then cuts to a bolt of purgatorial flame that strikes outside, like a rival *coup de foudre*. No wonder *L'Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican newspaper, has given the movie its blessing.



Daniel Radcliffe in the sixth installment of the J. K. Rowling series.

The plot concerns—as it interminably does, from film to film—the plan of Lord Voldemort and his minions to lay waste to the wizardry of kindness. His Lordship is not present, confining his appearance to a yawning face in the clouds, which allows Yates to paint his skies with the same bruised, lead-and-sepia tone that he uses to tint the entire landscape of the movie. Not only is this lowering to behold; it also scrubs away any remembrance that this saga of gifted kids was once a bit of a jape. Why is it that, from Gotham City to Hogwarts, the official word has gone out that anything dark and edgy is a de-facto guarantee of weight and impact? Just what is so serious about horny adolescents cooking potions? We get one lovely, cheering sequence of a trashed room putting itself in order, like the untidy nursery in "Mary Poppins," but the rest of the magic here feels randomly grabbed at—there is something called a vanishing cabinet, whose narrative purpose is wholly redundant—and, as if in response to such silliness, Yates tries to stiffen his story with borrowings from "The Lord of the Rings." We get a dead spider named Aragog, which is a breath away from Tolkien, plus Gandalfian flourishes from Dumbledore, and a rock pool that crawls with a hundred Gollums; but Middle-earth cohered, with its own hierarchy and history, and offcuts of it make no sense. All in all, despite the verve that drives the grander set pieces, it's hard to avoid the sensation of a film toiling overtime to convince itself of its own solemnity; hence Harry's repeated, Gospel-slanted announcement that he is "the Chosen One." I preferred the moment near the start when he described himself, to a Muggle waitress, as "a bit of a tosser, really"—English slang for a useless bloke, or, originally, a masturbator. That's more like it.

To pass from "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince" to "In the Loop" is to exchange a battlefield in which the lines are clearly drawn, with the noble squaring up to the malevolent, for a rancorous melee in which nobody can claim an advantage. Armando Iannucci's film is set in London and Washington, which is a way of saying that it delivers a kicking to the seats of power. Our first sight of Downing Street, where the leader of Her Majesty's Government resides, finds it covered in scaffolding, and the suspicion lingers that it could—and maybe should—collapse at any point. Inside lurks Malcolm Tucker (Peter Capaldi), the Prime Minister's press secretary, who is one part human to three parts underfed weasel. (The character is plainly a riff on Alastair Campbell, who used to do the same job for Tony Blair.) Whippy and darting, a cell phone to each ear, signing off his opening tirade with "Fuckitybye," he bares his teeth at all those in his purview, reserving particular contempt for anyone who uses a word like "purview." "Where d'you think you are, in some fucking Regency costume drama?" he asks. He could have been designed to erase any traces of the American faith in England as a green and pleasant land, where you might once have acquired a decent education and a varnish of manners.

By way of balance, the film also lashes out at the British view of the United States. There is an unspecified war brewing (we are meant to think of the buildup to Iraq, which was Campbell's finest and most unpardonable hour), and a junior cabinet minister, Simon Foster (Tom Hollander), an acknowledged expert at saying the wrong thing ("I'm a fake hawk"), is shipped off to America with Toby (Chris Addison), his pale young assistant—or, in Tucker's phrase, "fetus boy." Their task is to listen in and lend support to a major ally, and their most profound delusion is that the major ally still gives a millionth of a damn what Britain stands for, what it has to say, or, to be honest, where it is. For reasons I never grasped, Tucker follows them, gets fobbed off with a smiling White House aide who looks about nine years old, and meets his match in an American general (James Gandolfini), who sounds, moves, and eats like no soldier I have ever encountered.

"In the Loop" began as a BBC drama series, "The Thick of It," and, as tends to happen when the small screen is stretched to the big, there are problems with elastication. The itchy camerawork, poking around in cramped rooms, left television viewers with a reliable dose of claustrophobia, but over the longer haul that may thicken into a migraine; by the end of the film, you just want to get away from these people. Even Tucker's arias of bile, which on TV felt spontaneously disgorged, have come to seem a touch overworked. There is something more written than spoken about a line like "You stay detached, otherwise that's what I'll do to your retinas," and, whether or not Tucker is pleased with himself, the movie is undoubtedly all too pleased with Tucker. It trots behind him with its tongue hanging out (while mocking the Brits for scampering behind their American counterparts), and, brooking no argument, it takes his snarl of derision as the only conceivable stance. Should satire really seek to match the intolerance of its leading monsters? For the makers of "In the Loop," everyone in politics is either a beast or a dithering dolt, there is no basis for public service other than the foaming rage for power, and anyone who *dares* to dream otherwise—anyone who enjoys "The West Wing," for example—is the most credulous mug of all. Place Iannucci's work beside the new Harry Potter film, and you get a perplexing report on the corroded state of the British imagination. The choice appears to be between a soaring escape into fantasy, where the actions of a teen-ager can be loaded with universal portent, and a descent into the rat-run of moral contamination, where the policies of a government are pushed through on a ruse. So much denial and self-hatred, for a small country, and behind them both the aggrieved memory of lost influence: what hope is there for the return of the steady, tolerant gaze? ♦

NEWYORKER.COM

The Front Row, a blog about movies.

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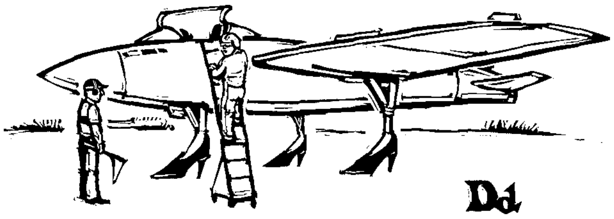
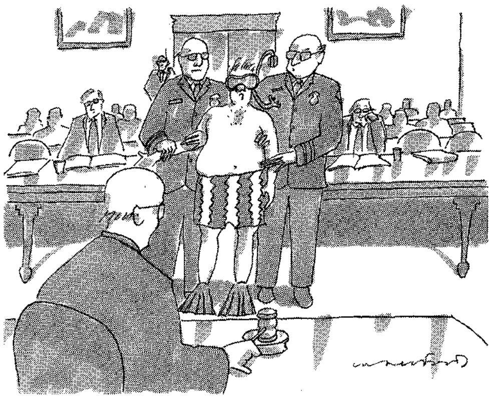
CARTOON CAPTION CONTEST

Each week, we provide a cartoon in need of a caption. You, the reader, submit a caption, we choose three finalists, and you vote for your favorite. Caption submissions for this week's cartoon, by Tom Cheney, must be received by Sunday, July 26th. The finalists in the July 6th & 13th contest appear below. We will announce the winner, and the finalists in this week's contest, in the August 10th & 17th issue. The winner receives a signed print of the cartoon. Any resident of the U.S. or Canada (except Quebec) age eighteen or over can enter or vote. To do so, and to read the complete rules, visit www.newyorker.com/captioncontest.

THE WINNING CAPTION



"She's a lover, not a fighter."
Robert McLean, Tampa, Fla.



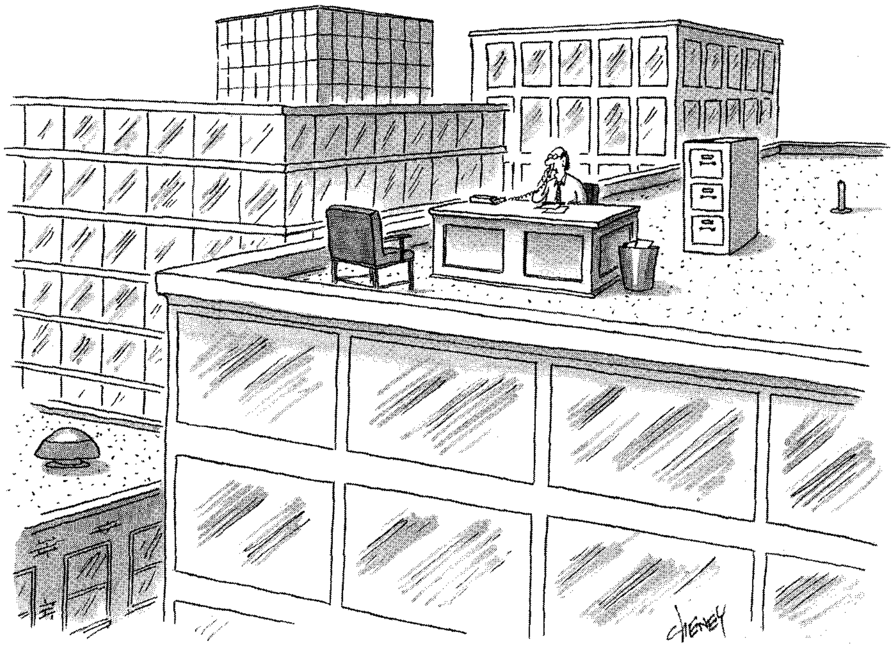
THE FINALISTS

"You think Alcatraz can hold me?"
Joshua Rosales, Rosemead, Calif.

"Go ahead, waterboard me."
Lester Craft, Jr., Basalt, Colo.

"Well, the menu did say 'Choose your own lobster.'"
Donna Palmer, Chattanooga, Tenn.

THIS WEEK'S CONTEST



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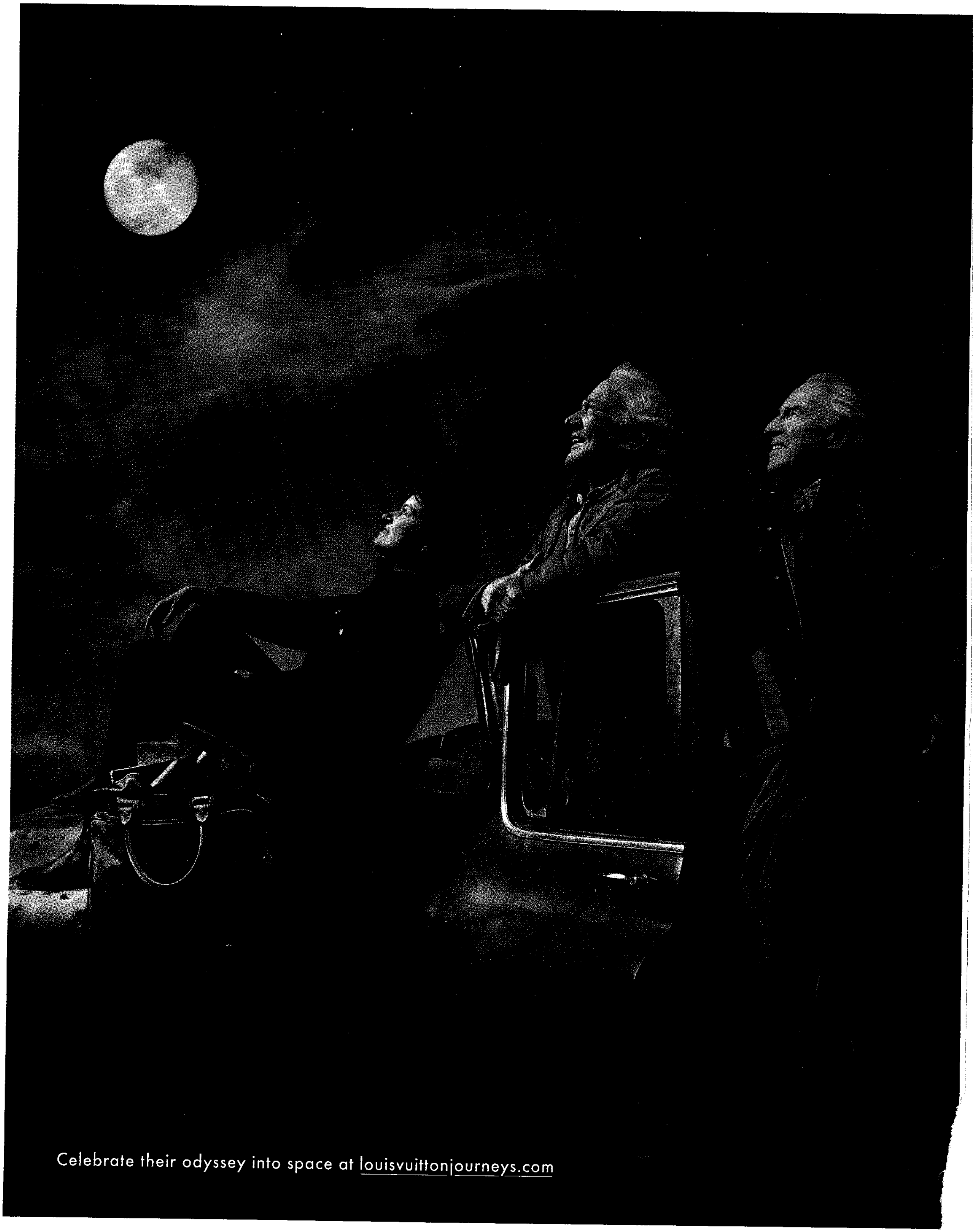

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